

# INVESTING IN THE FUTURES

OF CHILDREN IN NEED





# Shania

Cover and inside cover (L-R): *Learning for Life* student, Shania pictured with her *Learning for Life* program coordinator Kimberley, and her grandmother Karen.

## OUR VISION

A better future for young Australians in need.

## OUR MISSION

To create opportunities for young Australians in need by providing long-term support for their participation in education.

## OUR BELIEF

Every child deserves a chance.

## VALUES

Respect: We are caring  
Integrity: We are ethical  
Collaboration: We work together  
Innovation: We are dynamic  
Excellence: We strive for quality

# MAKING A LASTING DIFFERENCE

The Smith Family steps into a child's life even before they start school to help parents develop skills to nurture their child's learning and development. When a disadvantaged student begins their education journey, our support through the primary and secondary years helps them attend and complete school, and go on to further study or employment. We also provide tailored support for parents so students can have the best chance of breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

**By investing in a disadvantaged child's education, we can help them achieve a better future for themselves and make a lasting difference to their lives.**

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# OUR ACTIONS STOP POOR CHILDREN BECOMING POOR ADULTS

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Looking back over the last year we're delighted to report that The Smith Family made substantial progress towards achieving our mission. We exist to help children in need achieve better futures for themselves. We do this by supporting them to succeed at school.

Children from disadvantaged families need our support to make the most out of their school years. That's why we provide resources and create opportunities so they can participate fully in their education.

When they arrive at school in their first year, they want to fit in and belong. It's important that they have school essentials such as a new uniform, shoes, and money for excursions. To keep up with what's going on in the classroom, they need skills, particularly in reading and maths. We don't want them to fall behind, even before they've got through their first year.

To stop this happening, they need extra support so they can keep on learning and stay on track. Support that happens outside of school hours, in their homes and communities.

We're the organisation that knows how to help these kids achieve the future they deserve. And we are very focused on this vital work.

Take Corey, a primary school boy on our *Learning for Life* program, who lives with his grandmother, Jean. Corey had been struggling with his reading and Jean's lack of reading skills made it difficult for her to help. We connected Corey with our *student2student* program and now, thanks to his reading buddy's help, Corey's reading has improved. Jean has cared for her grandson since he was a baby and is very appreciative of our support: "Everything from The Smith Family is a great help, thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Today, more than ever, children like Corey need our help. They're being born into a rapidly changing world, a world that will require them to be highly adaptable to the pace of life and work in the 21st century. It means they'll be even more dependent on their education. In fact, every year they spend at school will count towards a better future.

But in Australia today, one in ten children is growing up in a jobless family. Research shows that these children are more likely to experience economic and social hardship when they are adults. It's these children we want to catch, to help them break a self-perpetuating cycle.

In this year's annual report we highlight the outcomes of our programs. We report on the five key measures of effectiveness that track our progress. We have made significant strides. The data from our research is telling a strong story: our support is enabling more young Australians to break the cycle of disadvantage. By making a lasting difference to the lives of children in need, our work is contributing to social change.



Chairman James M. Millar AM and Chief Executive Officer Dr Lisa O'Brien

## HIGHLIGHTS

This past year, 2014–15, marks the mid-point of our five-year strategy. Supported by sophisticated use of data, we've worked hard to ensure the effectiveness of our programs and also to grow our fundraising returns. Effective programs mean improved results for the children we support. It is crucial to be able to demonstrate these outcomes, and we can do this now. Our ability to show results through our outcomes data means we will attract more supporters to contribute to our work. And as our supporter base grows, so does our capacity to help more children in need. That's a very powerful motivator for The Smith Family.

We track the effectiveness of our *Learning for Life* program against three longer-term student outcomes. These are regular school attendance, completion of Year 12 or its equivalent, and post-school engagement in employment, education or training. We

recorded some very pleasing improvements in these longer-term outcomes this year, and this means ongoing positive results are being delivered.

In 2013 and 2014, we piloted new models for working in the community. Following evaluations of these pilots, we implemented a more effective way of working with students and their families. Over 2014–15, two thirds of our *Learning for Life* team members moved to this new way of working.

Pleasingly, this year the satisfaction levels of our volunteers rose to 94%. Volunteers work with us across all areas of our organisation, including providing pivotal support for our programs. Retaining them is imperative, which is why we work hard to ensure the quality of our mutual engagement.

During the year we celebrated a decade of delivering *Saver Plus*, the matched savings and financial literacy program developed by ANZ and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. This program enables

“Effective programs mean improved results for the children we support. It is crucial to be able to demonstrate these outcomes, and we can do this now.”

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

financially disadvantaged families to better manage their money and save for their children's education. We were delighted to receive the news in May that the Federal Government would fund this program for a further five years.

This year, there was growing recognition that The Smith Family is an organisation undertaking nationally significant research. We released two reports: one on the findings of the evaluation of our mathematics program for young children, *Let's Count*, and the other on youth transitions from school to work. Together with our evaluation partners, Charles Sturt University, Australian Catholic University and the Origin Foundation, we were delighted to share an award for *Excellence in Collaboration in Social Impact Measurement* given by the Social Impact Measurement Network of Australia.

During 2014–15, a new CEO's advisory group for The Smith Family was instituted. Chaired by one of our Directors, Christine Cawsey, the purpose of the Principals Advisory Group is to inform The Smith Family's long-term approach to working in partnership with schools.

Fundraising continues to be challenging as giving patterns change. To that end, we invested to achieve growth in our regular giving area. This was successful: we attracted nearly 10,000 new monthly donors to The Smith Family. In addition, a stronger focus on our major donors resulted in the provision of substantial gifts for the education of children in need. We are grateful for the support of these generous donors. Both our major donors and our corporate partners appreciate our ability to report on measurable impact. We are proud of the long-standing partnerships we have with the latter: 2015 marked 25 years with Colgate-Palmolive, 14 years with King & Wood Mallesons, and 16 years with Microsoft. Thank you for your enduring support – it is very much valued.

As the year ended, we were delighted to learn that we'd been awarded a substantial capacity-building grant of nearly \$1 million from Perpetual Trustees to fund our new enterprise information platform. Delivering this platform over the next three years will further enhance data management and reporting across the organisation.

The members of VIEW Clubs of Australia continued their strong support for our work. Ninety-two per cent of clubs are now sponsoring at least one *Learning for Life* student, with 79% supporting more than one. VIEW remains the single largest community sponsor, supporting 1,143 students on *Learning for Life*.

*Learning for Life* sponsored students Mackayla (L) and Vanessa pictured here with their mother Cherie.



## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

As part of the 2014–15 budget process, the Board approved a \$2.4 million investment from our reserves to support effective program implementation, to grow our fundraising returns and to develop resources supporting operational efficiencies. Taking this into account, we forecast an operating deficit of \$2.8 million by June 2015. We are therefore pleased that the actual operating result for the year was a deficit of \$2.2 million.

We are grateful to all who gave funds to The Smith Family this year. Total fundraising income for the year of \$52.5 million was in line with the original budget.

During the year we received the proceeds from the sale of our Collingwood building, which saw a net gain of just over \$7 million. The final result has therefore been buoyed by this sale, and sees us end the year with a surplus of \$4.9 million. This surplus will allow us to invest further in programs, fundraising and infrastructure development in the coming financial year.

**“We are grateful to all who gave funds to The Smith Family this year. Total fundraising income for the year of \$52.5 million was in line with the original budget.”**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

In this message, we've shared only a few of our key achievements. Please read our report for more information on our progress. And know that we don't intend to stop what we are doing. Because what drives us are the children and young people we support. The aspirations of these young Australians to achieve better futures for themselves are at the heart of our work. It's because of them that we do what we do.

Working in partnership is the most effective way to achieve results for children and families in need. We thank all our supporters: your help enabled us to make significant headway this year. Special thanks go to all our sponsors, donors and those individuals who've left The Smith Family a gift in their wills. Your contributions are much valued.

Our community and corporate volunteers also help us in so many ways. The ongoing support of our corporate partners, and the universities, trusts and foundations, schools and governments with which we work is very much appreciated. Thank you to all.

We acknowledge the commitment of the members of our Board and our advisory groups. These individuals provide important advice and expertise; this is vital and strengthens our organisation. Thank you for your service.

Lastly, we acknowledge all our Smith Family team members. It makes us proud to know we have the best people here, doing what each does so very well indeed. Every single one of you contributed to our great year. Your dedication to our mission is how we drove so much progress this year. Thank you very much for everything you do.

## OUR UNIQUENESS

The Smith Family delivers a unique solution to long-term disadvantage. Our programs are in every State and Territory with outcomes measured and tracked over time. Supporting children to participate in education helps prevent a lifetime of poverty. The parents we work with are strongly engaged with this approach.

By investing in a child's education, we can break a cycle of disadvantage. And by believing in those young people, we can help them believe in themselves.

**James M. Millar AM and Dr Lisa O'Brien**

# WE KNOW THE PROBLEM

## THE CYCLE OF DISADVANTAGE

### LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

Challenges include sickness, disability, unemployment, difficulty affording basic living costs, inability to provide resources for their children's education, and a lack of knowledge on how best to support their educational development.

### POORER EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

Lacking essential skills when they start school, not having the items needed to fit in at school, limited access to resources to support learning development, falling behind at school and difficulty catching up, limited or no access to positive role models to guide study/career paths.



### POORER OVERALL LIFE OUTCOMES

Unable to get ahead in life, health and wellbeing affected, passing on disadvantage to the next generation.

### DIFFICULTY GETTING A JOB

Lack of engagement in education, low resilience and determination levels, leaving school early with few or no qualifications, fewer job opportunities, no connections to community networks and services.



# DISADVANTAGE AT EVERY STAGE

## EARLY YEARS

PAGE 24

## PRIMARY YEARS

PAGE 26

## SECONDARY YEARS

PAGE 28

## POST-SCHOOL YEARS

PAGE 30



### DEVELOPMENTALLY VULNERABLE

One in three children in Australia's most disadvantaged communities is developmentally vulnerable in one or more key areas when they start school.<sup>1</sup> These include language and cognitive skills and physical health and wellbeing.

### READING STANDARDS

One in five children growing up in low socio-economic status (SES) households did not achieve the national minimum reading standard.<sup>2</sup>

### YEAR 12 COMPLETION RATES

In 2013, 68% of young people from the most disadvantaged areas completed Year 12, compared with 79% of students from the most advantaged areas.<sup>3</sup>

### LOW REPRESENTATION AT UNIVERSITY

There is persistent under-representation of people from low SES backgrounds in Australian universities.<sup>4</sup> University students from low SES backgrounds report feeling less prepared, with greater levels of concern and stress than their peers.<sup>5</sup>



1 Australian Government, *Australian Early Development Index 2012: Summary report*, 2013.  
 2 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014, *National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy National Report for 2014*. Low SES household in this instance is defined as parental education at Year 11 or below.  
 3 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*.  
 4 Universities Australia 2008, *Advancing Equity and Participation in Australian Higher Education*.  
 5 Baik, C., Naylor, R. and Arkoudis, S., 2015, *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities*.



## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

“Education is the key to success, that’s what I tell the girls. [The Smith Family] gives the resources, which means a way forward and an incentive for them to strive to be the most successful they can be.”

Garry is a single father to four girls aged between 12 and 18. Six years ago, having moved from interstate, the family was struggling before being referred to The Smith Family to access our *Learning for Life* program.

Garry has a chronic health condition and is unable to work. His daughters are his primary carers, but Garry won’t let his illness affect their education.

“The main thing is that my girls are happy. Without The Smith Family, that wouldn’t happen because I just wouldn’t be able to make that dollar stretch any further. From time to time they have to miss out on excursions, but they have the uniforms and learning tools, which is more than some of their friends.”

A tough upbringing meant Garry never received an education himself, but he wants his daughters to follow a different path.

“My girls strive to be ‘A’ students and they have been rewarded for their commitment with opportunities through The Smith Family like *Bella* [creative arts program] and the *National Aspiring Leaders Summit*. These are real-life experiences they would otherwise have missed out on. It’s because of The Smith Family’s help that they’re doing so well, as that little bit extra makes all the difference when it comes to having the right resources to learn.”

**OUR STRATEGY**  
OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY PROVIDES  
THE FRAMEWORK FOR LONG-TERM  
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR  
DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG PEOPLE

# **WE KNOW WHAT TO DO**

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# ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

## FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

Our actions are driven by the four priorities underpinning our five-year strategy. To ensure we remain focused on achieving our goals, we track five key measures of effectiveness over time. The achievement of short- and longer-term outcomes through participation in our programs helps change a disadvantaged child's future.

### OUR AMBITION

To ensure the effectiveness of our programs and, with the help of our supporters, to significantly increase our reach to help support more disadvantaged children, young people and their parents/carers.

### MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

against which our progress is tracked

1. Improving school attendance rates of <i>Learning for Life</i> students over time to 90%	PAGE 14
2. Increasing the proportion of Year 10 <i>Learning for Life</i> students who advance to Year 12 or its equivalent on sponsorship	PAGE 15
3. Increasing the proportion of Year 10, 11 and 12 <i>Learning for Life</i> students who are engaged in work or further study up to 12 months after they leave the program	PAGE 15
4. Influencing the policy agenda of governments in our mission-critical areas	PAGE 16
5. Significantly broadening our supporter base and growing our funds raised	PAGE 17

### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

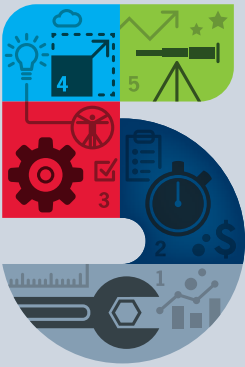
we are seeking to achieve

At the individual/family level	At the school level	At the community level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved literacy and numeracy</li> <li>Improved confidence and self-efficacy</li> <li>Improved motivation and aspiration</li> <li>Enhanced networks and relationships</li> <li>Improved knowledge and understanding</li> <li>Improved or sustained school attendance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased access to and use of community resources</li> <li>Increased parental engagement in their children's learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved service collaboration and integration</li> <li>Enhanced cross-sectoral partnerships</li> </ul>

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

for 2014–15

1. To provide effective support through innovative quality programs	2. To be an influential advocate for disadvantaged young Australians	3. To connect the Australian community with the plight of disadvantaged young Australians and engage them to support our mission	4. To build a high-performing and sustainable organisation
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## YEAR 3: IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Our five-year strategy provides the framework for achieving our ambition to ensure our effectiveness and to grow our reach. Across each year of our five-year journey there is a key theme. Year 3 (2014–15) was a year of implementing change, developing the skills of our people, and bringing about cultural change. We also invested in systems and resources to support our work.

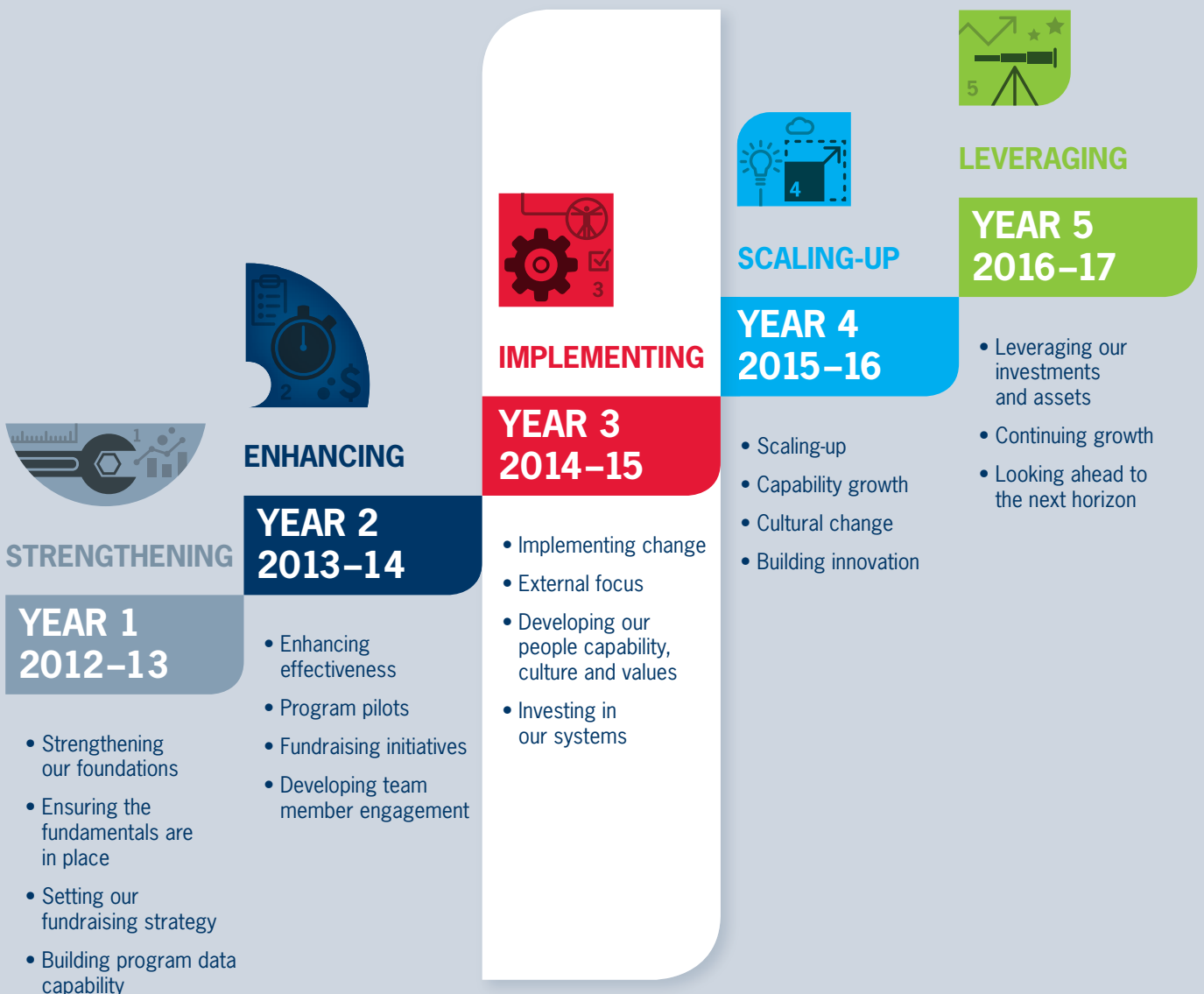




Photo: Valeriu Campan, courtesy Progress Leader

## HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED

“My family endured a lot of hardship over the years. Without The Smith Family, I think my sisters and I would not have found the true power of education and realised our potential to help others see that value and pursue it for themselves,” Yasmin, a *Learning for Life* graduate, reveals.

Yasmin and her sisters Soraya and Aliyah have been supported by The Smith Family’s *Learning for Life* program for more than 10 years. Yasmin was sponsored through secondary school and for five years of her tertiary study, allowing her to complete a Bachelor of Arts in Professional and Creative Writing and a Graduate Diploma in Applied Learning (Education).

She is now completing a PhD, and works for Deakin University in Victoria on a program inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to pursue higher education.

“The Smith Family sponsorship helped me with uniforms, school books and going to camps. When I got to university, it helped with the costs of transport, university materials and books.”

Yasmin also had a lot of contact with her *Learning for Life* sponsor whose correspondence motivated her throughout her education.

“I remember being so excited to get mail from my sponsor and then to write back to her,” she says.

Describing The Smith Family as a constant source of support throughout the family’s struggles, Yasmin is now looking forward to making a contribution by becoming a mentor to a *Learning for Life* tertiary student.

## **OUR PROGRESS**

**WE TRACK OUR PROGRESS TOWARDS  
ACHIEVING OUR AMBITION AGAINST  
FIVE KEY MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

**WE RESPOND  
WITH ACTION**

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## FIVE KEY MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

# WE TRACK OUR RESULTS

### 1 ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is critical to achieve positive educational outcomes.

LONGER-TERM RESULTS

LEARNING FOR LIFE STUDENTS' AVERAGE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN 2014:

91.3%

primary school students  
(91.2% in 2013)

86.9%

secondary school students  
(86% in 2013)

87.3%

Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander school students  
(86.9% in 2013)

SHORT-TERM RESULTS

Improved literacy and numeracy

Improved or sustained school attendance

Increased self-management and self-efficacy

Improved motivation and aspirations

PROGRAM RESULTS

LET'S COUNT

58%

of participating young children could count a collection of at least 20 items, compared with 37% of similar children who did not participate.

LET'S READ

90%

of surveyed parents indicated that they read more with their child.<sup>1</sup>

STUDENT2STUDENT

95%

of students improved their reading. 88% of students reported that they enjoy reading more now.

LEARNING CLUBS (PRIMARY)

89%

of students said it helped them try harder at school. 93% of students said it taught them to ask for help when they don't understand.

GIRLS AT THE CENTRE

5%

higher average school attendance in semester 1 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls on the program, compared with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls at the same school.

<sup>1</sup> Latest available evaluation data as at 30 June 2015.



We track the progress of 34,000 students receiving *Learning for Life* support across three longer-term outcomes: school attendance, completion of Year 12 or its equivalent, and post-school engagement in education or work. Taking part in our programs helps them achieve short-term outcomes and puts them on the path to achieving the three longer-term outcomes. The improvements recorded show that we are delivering positive outcomes for the students we support.

## 2 ADVANCEMENT

Each completed year of schooling enables better overall life outcomes and improves an individual's ability to contribute economically and socially in the community.

## 3 ENGAGEMENT

A key indicator of the success of our approach is the proportion of *Learning for Life* students successfully transitioning from school to further education, training or employment.

**LEARNING FOR LIFE STUDENTS ADVANCING THROUGH SCHOOL FROM YEAR 10 TO YEAR 12 OR ITS EQUIVALENT BY 2014:**

# 63.2%

of students in Year 10 in 2012 advanced to Year 12 in 2014 while still on *Learning for Life* sponsorship. This is a 3.2% improvement on the 2010–2012 rate.

**FORMER LEARNING FOR LIFE STUDENTS ENGAGING IN POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION, TRAINING OR EMPLOYMENT:**

# 84.2%

of *Learning for Life* students, who left in Years 10–12, were engaged in work and/or study 12 months after leaving the program. Of the remaining 16%, four in five were actively seeking employment, and one in six was volunteering.

Enhanced networks and relationships      Improved knowledge and understanding of financial management

Improved knowledge and understanding of study options and career paths

**ITRACK**

# 87%

of participating students agreed that chatting with their mentor helped them understand more about reaching their career goals. 88% agreed that their mentor helped them to be more positive about their future career and study options.

**CERTIFICATE 1 FINANCIAL SERVICES**

# 92%

of participants attained the Certificate 1 qualification. 85% of students post-program understood how superannuation works.

**TECH PACKS**

# 75%

of parents/carers reported increased computer and internet access.

**SAVER PLUS**

# 87%

of participants had continued saving 12 months after completing the program.<sup>1</sup>

# FIVE KEY MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

## 4 INFLUENCING THE POLICY AGENDA OF GOVERNMENTS IN OUR MISSION-CRITICAL AREAS

### ADVOCACY

10

public policy submissions

This year we implemented a more systematic approach to engaging with key Commonwealth, State and Territory politicians and departmental staff. At the Commonwealth level, we met with politicians and staff from areas including Prime Minister and Cabinet, Education, Employment, Indigenous Affairs, Social Services and Treasury. This provided an opportunity to discuss policy settings and priorities in relation to education, post-school outcomes and disadvantaged young people.

Our policy submissions to governments covered topics such as the Commonwealth Budget, income inequality, the Tasmania Education Act and The Forrest Review.

Media coverage, including our opinion pieces on topics such as the importance of early mathematics learning and the impact of early intervention on entrenched disadvantage, were published in major newspapers, including *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and *The West Australian*. Our *Let's Count* program evaluation report achieved excellent media exposure across the country, reaching over five million Australians.

### RESEARCH

4

research publications

The Smith Family published two research reports in 2014–15:

- *Strengthening early numeracy learning: The Let's Count program*
- *Young people's successful transition to work: What are the pre-conditions?*

There was broader interest in our work and a growing level of influence. We contributed chapters on our *Learning for Life* program and its outcomes for disadvantaged students to two independent publications:

- *Addressing entrenched disadvantage in Australia*, Report by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia
- *Beyond the lens of financial vulnerability: Supporting vulnerable young people to stay engaged in education* (from the book *Interrogating Conceptions of "Vulnerable Youth" in Theory, Policy and Practice* edited by Kitty te Riele and Radhika Gorur)

Substantial progress was made on all five Australian Research Council Linkage grant projects in which The Smith Family is a partner. The grants are multi-year research collaborations involving higher education researchers, industry, government and non-government organisations. We surveyed 6,000 *Learning for Life* students and their parents/carers to examine the circumstances of socio-economically disadvantaged families and the factors contributing to improved educational outcomes, as part of one of these grants.

Research reports can be accessed from [thesmithfamily.com.au](http://thesmithfamily.com.au)

5

Australian Research Council Linkage grants

### LEADERSHIP

18

conference papers/external presentations

7

presentations at Smith Family-hosted events

This year, 18 conference or external presentations were given at industry events, including the NSW Principals Annual Conference, the Rural Education Conference, Not-For-Profit People Conference and the Measuring Social Outcomes Conference. We also presented at events organised by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia.

The Smith Family's Head of Research and Advocacy joined an expert panel hosted by the Grattan Institute to discuss the importance of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) for young Australians.

To support the expansion of *Let's Count*, we developed and delivered thought-leadership events nationwide at which we discussed Australia's mathematics challenge and the findings of our evaluation of the program.

# 5 SIGNIFICANTLY BROADENING OUR SUPPORTER BASE AND GROWING OUR FUNDS RAISED

## OVERALL INCOME

# \$86.8m

Net income 2014–15

Net income grew to \$86.8 million, 7% higher than in 2013–14. This included funds raised from individual supporters, corporate partners, universities, trusts and foundations, bequests, and through the support received from VIEW Clubs of Australia; government funding, and investment income, together with net revenue from our Recycling Operation and the sale of the Collingwood property.

### Other income \$11.7m

In addition to fundraising from our supporters and government funding, we received income from the surpluses of our Recycling Operation and other commercial activities, as well as from our investments and the gain on the sale of our Collingwood property.

### TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS AND VALUE INCREASED

8,711 volunteers contributed 516,750 hours of support, up from 463,853 hours last year. The estimated value of this support is \$14.8 million.

## FUNDRAISING PERFORMANCE

# \$52.5m

Funds raised in 2014–15

In line with our five-year fundraising strategy, the focus of our fundraising efforts remained on working with our core segments of individual and major donors and with our corporate and philanthropic partners. This year we fundraised \$52.5 million for our work, the majority coming from these groups of supporters.

Great progress was made in obtaining supporters via face-to-face acquisition, with 9,996 monthly donors joining The Smith Family over the year. The increased focus on our major donors generated 21% growth in income from this segment, compared to the previous year. Our major donors will see their substantial gifts invested in improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged children.

Another key result was the significant improvement in how we work with our business partners, creating new funding opportunities and models of shared value for both new and existing partners.

In addition, 2014–15 was another strong year for bequests.

## GOVERNMENT FUNDING

# \$22.6m

Government funding in 2014–15

Government funding decreased by 14% during the year, from \$26.1 million in 2013–14 to \$22.6 million in 2014–15.

This reflects the winding down of the Commonwealth-funded *School Business Community Partnership Brokers* program in December 2014 and the ending of Commonwealth support for the *Better Futures*, *Local Solutions* and the *Work Inspiration* programs in 2015. These reductions were partially offset by one-year NSW State Government funding to pilot the *Grants for Graduation* program, and in Tasmania by the establishment of a second *School Community Hub* in Launceston. Government funding for other programs remained stable.

The conclusion of the *School Business Community Partnership Brokers* program is regrettable, as it has meant fewer services being provided to disadvantaged young people making the transition from school to work or further studies.

We continue to explore alternative government funding possibilities aligned to our mission, and are pleased to report the anticipated renewal of funding over five years for *Saver Plus*. We were also successful in securing funding under the Commonwealth's Indigenous Advancement Strategy for the continued delivery of the *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project* over the next three years, as well as a number of smaller regional programs and activities.

# 124,902 PARTICIPANTS

THE SMITH FAMILY REACHED 124,902 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS, CARERS AND COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS IN 2014-15

**57,050**

Participants in programs funded by our supporters, including sponsors, donors, universities, trusts and foundations and corporate partners.

A 5% increase in participants on 2013-14. Significant increases recorded for *Let's Count*, *Work Inspiration* and *Certificate 1 Financial Services*.

**32,082**

Participants in programs funded by a mix of supporters, including partial government funding.

A 17% decrease in participants due to non-recurring government funding for *Let's Read*.

**35,770**

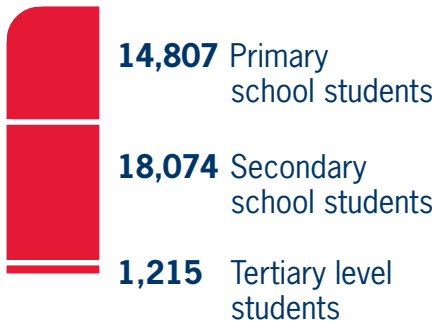
Participants in programs funded wholly by governments.

A 13% decrease in participants as a result of government policy and funding changes.

## KEY PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTING TO THE NUMBERS REACHED

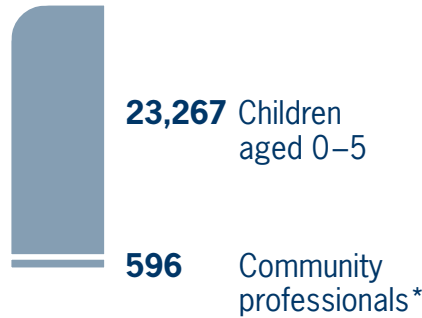
**34,096**

*Learning for Life* sponsorship recipients



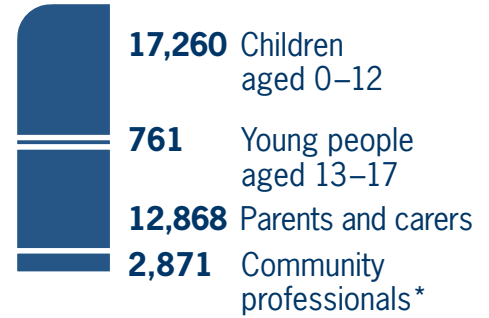
**23,863**

*Let's Read* participants



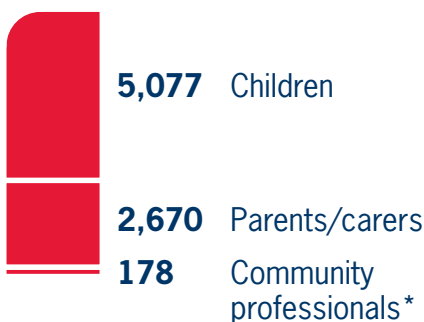
**33,760**

*Communities for Children* participants



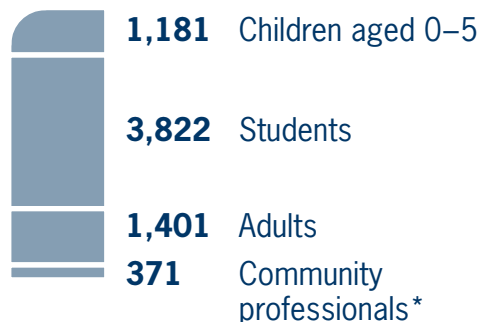
**7,925**

*Let's Count* participants



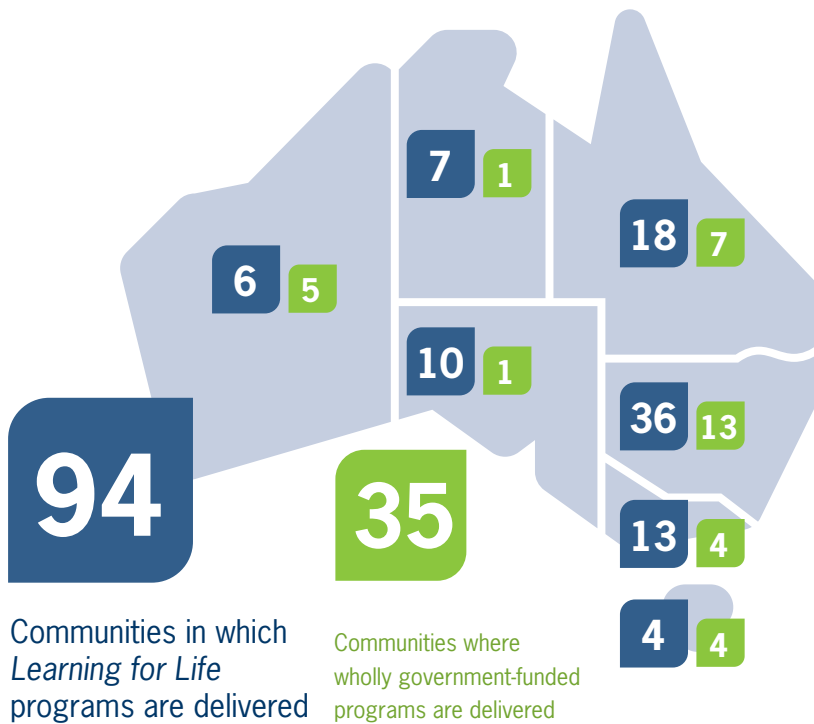
**6,775**

*School Community Hubs* participants



\* Community professionals (not Smith Family team members) include early child care educators and professional program facilitators in communities.

# 94 COMMUNITIES



**18%** of students on sponsorship (5,981) in 2014–15 identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, up from 16% last year.

**53%** of students on sponsorship lived in one-parent families.

# 149,425 SUPPORTERS

A 12% INCREASE IN INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS, UP FROM 133,442 LAST YEAR



## PROPORTION OF FUNDS RAISED SPENT ON COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

In 2014–15, 82 cents in every dollar of funds raised from individual supporters, corporate partners, universities, trusts and foundations, bequests and through the support received from VIEW Clubs of Australia and governments, was spent on our community programs. The surplus of \$2.4 million from our Recycling Operation and from other commercial activities offset our infrastructure costs, ensuring funds raised can be spent as much as possible on programs supporting children and young people in need.





Benjawan

Photo: Elise Derwin/Newspix

## EXTRA SUPPORT TO ENABLE SUCCESS

“My biggest challenge was to move from Thailand to Australia without knowing any English. It was hard to get along with other kids and to communicate with my teachers,” says Year 11 student Benjawan.

In 2008 Benjawan and her family moved to Australia searching for a better life. Not speaking any English, being in a new country, and growing up in a single-parent household presented many challenges, but things were made easier with The Smith Family’s help.

“The Smith Family has supported my sister and me to achieve the best we can in school. It has made a huge difference. I have been able to have all the school equipment, such as shoes, books, clothes and excursions, and I’ve had the chance to do things that I never thought I would do,” says Benjawan, who has participated in The Smith Family’s programs.

“School, and everything, is getting better with the help of The Smith Family. Speaking English is not so hard anymore. I still need some work on my writing and spelling skills, but I’m sure I’ll be more successful for my future.”

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1**  
TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT THROUGH  
INNOVATIVE, QUALITY PROGRAMS

# OUR ACTIONS COUNT

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## OUR APPROACH

In Australia today, one in 10 children is growing up in a jobless family. The circumstances of their upbringing can adversely affect their educational outcomes and their ability to create a positive future for themselves.

Education is a key enabler of economic and social participation for young people from all backgrounds. Research shows that completing Year 12 or its equivalent, increases the likelihood that a young person will move into further study or employment and go on to participate fully in their community with improved employment, health and overall life outcomes.

We focus our work on providing long-term educational support for young Australians in need. Our approach is to work with students, their families and in their communities at every stage of a disadvantaged student's journey through education. Targeted programs that help children to participate fully, mitigate against the negative impacts of growing up in financial hardship.

We work with families living in highly disadvantaged communities in every state and territory. The students we support are more disadvantaged than their peers in the same schools. They are less likely to have a parent who has completed high school, less likely to have a parent in employment, and more likely to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. Our programs and support are tailored to overcome the specific barriers to education these students and families face.

Our support starts in the early years before children start school, with programs for parents and community professionals that nurture learning and development in young children. We also foster strong relationships with parents and carers so they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to positively influence their child's education and promote a stronger learning environment in the home.

During primary and secondary school, students' school essentials are supported through the financial assistance received from sponsors. Encouragement for their education and links to local services are provided by a Smith Family *Learning for Life* program coordinator, as is access to educational and learning programs, all giving the extra help and support children need to keep up in class.

This balanced, long-term support from an early age, helps disadvantaged students achieve our three longer-term outcomes – strong school attendance, completion of Year 12 or its equivalent, and post-school engagement in employment, education or training. At every life stage it gives children and young people in need the support they require to overcome their disadvantage and become productive and thriving citizens. Our long-term investment makes a lasting difference to the futures of children in need.

### LEARNING FOR LIFE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Our *Learning for Life* program provides financial support from sponsors to cover the cost of sponsored students' school items such as uniforms and school camps. Families experiencing financial hardship often struggle to afford these items. Each sponsored student is also linked with a *Learning for Life* program coordinator. Program coordinators connect students with educational support and mentoring programs to help them stay motivated at school, keep up with their classmates and develop aspirations for their future. Program coordinators also work with parents, schools and community professionals to foster effective parental engagement throughout their children's education.

#### How Learning for Life works



**FINANCIAL SUPPORT**



**RELATIONSHIP WITH A LEARNING FOR LIFE PROGRAM COORDINATOR**



**ACCESS TO PROGRAMS FROM EARLY YEARS TO TERTIARY LEVEL**





**CASE STUDY –  
LEARNING FOR LIFE TEAM PROFILE, GOLD COAST**

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

Strong parental engagement in a child's learning and education is crucial for improving their school attendance and educational outcomes.

Research shows that parental engagement, including creating a positive learning environment in the home, is a bigger predictor of how children perform at school than a family's background. Not surprisingly, parents are the strongest influencers on their child's attitude to learning, school attendance and the development of future career goals. For this reason our *Learning for Life* program is underpinned by a partnership agreement with families. This acknowledges a mutual commitment to supporting students' long-term educational participation.

We help parents gain the skills, knowledge and the confidence to take an active role in their children's learning in the home, by connecting them with targeted programs. Our partnerships in communities with other service providers, governments, businesses and educators create additional opportunities for disadvantaged students and their families to access skills building, educational or extracurricular programs.

**“The same amount of total investment distributed more evenly over the life cycle of a child produces more adult skills than policy that concentrates attention on only one part of the child's life cycle.”**

**Professor James J. Heckman,**  
Nobel Laureate Economist, and  
**Associate Professor Flávio Cunha**



(L-R): Alexandra Nicol and Kirstyn Ross are now in specialised roles.

**“With my role dedicated to sponsorship delivery, I am able to build stronger relationships with families and help celebrate their successes,” says Kirstyn Ross, Family Partnership Coordinator for The Smith Family in Southport.**

In late 2014, our Gold Coast *Learning for Life* team moved to a new structure for delivering sponsorships and programs in communities. Under the new structure, *Learning for Life* teams now have two distinct roles: a family partnership coordinator and a programs coordinator.

As a family partnership coordinator, Kirstyn works more closely with *Learning for Life* families, helping them access services and resources that boost a child's engagement with learning. Kirstyn supports 322 families and 642 students between Coolangatta and Coomera.

Kirstyn's colleague, Alexandra Nicol, moved into a programs coordinator role and is focused on building stronger relationships with The Smith Family's existing partner schools and starting discussions with new schools.

“Previously we each worked within a particular geographic area and covered all aspects of both roles. Now I am able to focus all my attention on coordinating the delivery of programs at our nine partner schools. I can see there is great potential to offer support to many more students in need at these particular schools,” Alexandra says.

Prior to 2014, The Smith Family piloted a range of delivery models aimed at improving the effectiveness of *Learning for Life* teams. During 2014–15, 64% of *Learning for Life* teams transitioned to delivery models with specialised roles. The remaining *Learning for Life* team members will transition as funds become available.

# 39,263

children under five participating in early years programs

## 23,267

children aged from birth to five years participating in *Let's Read*

## 9,285

children under five participating in *Communities for Children*

## 7,925

participating in *Let's Count*, including 5,077 children, 2,670 parents and 178 community professionals

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# EARLY YEARS



One fifth of young children are developmentally vulnerable in one or more key areas when they start school. This increases to one in three children in Australia's most disadvantaged communities.<sup>1</sup>

The early years are a critical period when the pathways to a child's lifetime social, emotional and educational outcomes begin. Although early experiences do not determine children's ongoing development, the patterns laid down early tend to be very persistent, and some have lifelong consequences.<sup>2</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE

Foundation skills like numeracy and literacy are vital for successful and effective participation in our society and economy. Yet many children from Australia's most disadvantaged communities are starting school without basic maths and reading skills, placing them behind their more well-off peers in the first year of school. The effects of financial hardship can mean these children have fewer learning resources in the home. The varying capacity of parental support can hinder children's development in the key early learning areas of language, literacy, numeracy and cognitive skills. Supporting parents to know how to help their child's learning and development from a young age is crucial for a disadvantaged child's future educational achievement.

<sup>1</sup> Australian Government 2013, *Australian Early Development Index, Summary Report, 2012.*

<sup>2</sup> Harrison, L. J., Goldfeld, S., Metcalfe, E. and Moore, T., 2012, *Early learning programs that promote children's developmental and educational outcomes.*

### CASE STUDY – LET'S READ

## READING FOR LIFE

Daisy

"I believe that if my children see their parents getting involved with *Let's Read*, it encourages them with their own reading. If they see the parents interested, they will be more interested," says Daisy, a Melbourne mother of five.

Delivered through early childhood services, *Let's Read* provides books and encourages families and caregivers to share words and stories with children every day. It helps parents to develop the literacy skills of their young children and to establish a love of books early in their lives, preparing them for a successful start at school.

For Daisy, the program is a great way for her to build a support system at home. Daisy still remembers her own struggles with reading. When she reached high school, she discovered she was mispronouncing words and "the teachers would correct me in front of the whole class".

"I don't want my kids to go through that," she says.

One of the strategies that Daisy uses includes turning her cooking time into reading time with the children. As she prepares the family dinner, her older children bring their books into the kitchen and read aloud to each other, and test their mum to see if she's been paying attention to the stories.

"I see reading as a really important tool," she says.



(L-R): Daisy and her son Malofou attend the *Let's Read* program in Brimbank, Victoria.

## HOW WE HELP

Families are a child's first and most influential teachers so we focus our support in the early years on working with the child, their parents and the community professionals involved with them. Our programs *Let's Read* and *Let's Count* equip parents with skills and knowledge to help their child learn and develop at home. Training, support and learning resources for families and early childhood educators provide the tools to give young children early exposure to reading and maths. Developing these skills is crucial in preparing a child for school and setting them up for success later in life.

We are the facilitating partner in nine Australian Government *Communities for Children Facilitating Partner* sites in New South Wales, the Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. In this role, we connect families, children and service providers to help strengthen children's development and wellbeing and the capacity of communities to support this.

Our holistic approach that involves support for children, families and community professionals early on in a disadvantaged child's life, prepares a young child for school and gives them the confidence they need to make the most of their time there.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Communities for Children*
- *Let's Count*
- *Let's Read*
- *School Community Hubs*

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Parents have the skills and resources to support their children's early language, literacy and numeracy development.



Sari and Eli can now play card games confidently and these help develop their mathematical abilities.

## CASE STUDY – LET'S COUNT

### MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Sari & Eli

"We have had nothing but positive results from the program. Our kids seem to be able to add and subtract without us even realising they've learnt the skill."

Father of two Elia, and his wife, Melinda, were introduced to the early maths program *Let's Count* two years ago through their children's preschool. The program provides simple and practical skills to support parents to develop their preschoolers' early mathematics skills by noticing, exploring and talking about maths in their daily lives.

Elia believes his six-year-old son Eli was very well prepared to start school this year

as a result of being involved in *Let's Count* last year. His four-year-old daughter Sari is now benefiting from the program and the family has introduced fun mathematical experiences in their home.

"Our kids are really enjoying family games together at night, which they don't even realise are also educational. The card games Uno and Skip Bo are played skilfully and confidently by both children. This is contributing to their numeracy skills," says Elia.

"When we were first offered the chance to get involved we thought it sounded like a great idea and we're constantly surprised by the results. On a daily basis the kids make random statements, like: 'Eleven plus four equals 15, doesn't it, daddy and mummy?', which is pretty great."

*Let's Count* was delivered in 12 Australian communities with the support of the Origin Foundation this year. The program was developed by Professor Bob Perry (Charles Sturt University) and Professor Ann Gervasoni (Monash University) in partnership with BlackRock Investment Management (Australia) Limited.

# 28,358

primary school students participating in programs

## 14,807

primary school students sponsored through *Learning for Life*

## 7,975

primary school students participating in *Communities for Children*

## 2,956

primary school-aged participants, with 1,396 tutors in 199 Learning Clubs

## 1,089

student2student program participants supported by 1,073 reading buddies, with 131 volunteer buddy supervisors

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# PRIMARY YEARS



Of students in Year 5 whose parents' highest level of education was Year 11, 82% were at or above the national minimum reading standard. This compares with 98% of children whose parents had achieved a bachelor's degree.<sup>1</sup>

Relative disadvantage is unequivocally associated with poorer attendance from the very beginning of formal schooling. The effects of poor attendance accumulate over time and are reflected in academic achievement in numeracy, reading and writing.<sup>2</sup>

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to enjoy school and more likely to be low academic achievers.<sup>3</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE

Students from disadvantaged backgrounds need extra help to learn and thrive at school. Many are behind in the skills they need when they begin primary school and lack the confidence and ability to catch up and keep up with their peers. Factors in their home such as low income, low educational levels of parents, work commitments and limited parental engagement in their child's education, can mean disadvantaged students don't receive the support or resources they need to participate fully in education and realise their potential.

1 Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2014, *National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy National Report for 2014*.

2 Hancock, K. J., Shepherd, C. C. J., Lawrence, D. and Zubrick, R. R., 2013, *Student Attendance and Education Outcomes: Every day counts*.

3 Bond, S., 2009, *Learning Support Programs: Education reform beyond the school*.



Ingrid with her two sons, Memphis and Phoenix, who attend a Smith Family Learning Club each week.

Ingrid

### CASE STUDY – LEARNING CLUBS

## HELP WITH SCHOOLWORK

“One of my sons struggled a bit to fit in [at school], but the Learning Club has helped him to be more involved. It has given my sons more confidence,” says Ingrid, whose two sons, Memphis (10) and Phoenix (11), attend a Smith Family Learning Club each week.

A few years ago Ingrid and her family moved towns. Changing schools was difficult for the boys, who struggled with their learning and found it hard to fit in.

Through the new primary school, Ingrid's sons were linked to The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* program. They receive financial assistance from a sponsor to help with school expenses, and they receive access to programs, such as our Learning Club, so they can get the most from their education.

We run Learning Clubs throughout Australia with the support of community partners and trained volunteers. The clubs provide a safe and supportive out-of-school learning environment where primary or secondary students can participate in activities that develop their academic and social skills. Students attend at no cost and receive help from volunteer tutors.

For some disadvantaged students, a Learning Club may be the only out-of-school support they receive to help them keep up with their schoolwork. For Memphis and Phoenix, the social aspect of the Learning Club has also given them more confidence and boosted their self-esteem.

“My sons enjoy going there and having that time catching up on reading and using the iPads,” says Ingrid.

Without school essentials such as a uniform, textbooks, a computer at home or money to afford excursions, these students are more likely to struggle at school and find it hard to fit in and connect with their classmates. Without educational support from parents and carers, disadvantaged children can fall behind in their learning, making it even more difficult for them to stay engaged with their education and succeed at school.

## HOW WE HELP

Early intervention and long-term support is critical in helping a disadvantaged student achieve positive educational outcomes. Our *Learning for Life* sponsorship program begins when a disadvantaged child starts school. Students are linked with sponsors who provide financial assistance to families to help pay for the basics children need for school.

*Learning for Life* program coordinators build positive relationships with students and families to support good school attendance and engagement that can help prevent a child falling behind in their learning. Program coordinators also connect students with educational programs such as our before- and after-school Learning Clubs and the reading program, *student2student*. Programs like these provide the extra help many disadvantaged students need to increase their educational achievements.

We also recognise the importance of effective parental engagement in children's education. Program coordinators link parents with schools and opportunities in the local community that can help them develop their skills and confidence to provide an improved learning environment in the home. The *Tech Packs* program, for instance, provides disadvantaged families with affordable, internet-ready computers, and training and technical support to improve digital literacy skills. It also supports parents to help with their child's homework.

In areas where we are implementing the Government's *Communities for Children Facilitating Partner* initiative, we connect parents with opportunities in the local community that will help to strengthen skills and build positive networks for families.

Our support for a child and their parents during the primary school years is focused on establishing regular school attendance patterns and positive engagement with education and learning.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Communities for Children*
- Learning Clubs
- *School Community Hubs*
- *student2student*

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Improved confidence, knowledge and understanding
- Improved literacy and numeracy skills

## CASE STUDY – STUDENT2STUDENT

### UNLOCKING READING SKILLS

“Last year Sebastian was struggling with his reading, but once he started the program and was into it, he began to jump up reading levels quite quickly,” says Teresa, whose son Sebastian participated in *student2student*.

Ten-year-old Sebastian and three of his four siblings are supported by The Smith Family's *Learning for Life* program, which provides financial assistance for educational essentials and access to learning programs.

Sebastian's reading ability was falling behind his peers until he started participating in the reading program. As his ability to read grew, so too did his love of books. Now when Teresa listens to her son reading aloud, she's amazed by how much he has improved and how much his confidence has grown.

Student readers like Sebastian are paired with a trained student buddy who listens to them read over the phone, two to three times each week for 18 weeks. The regular reading practice in a supportive learning environment gives young readers the confidence to improve their skills. The program's success is tracked annually in evaluations – this year 95% of participants had improved their reading.

Teresa said Sebastian and his buddy get along well, something that has motivated him to keep reading. “Sebastian trusts [his buddy] and he enjoys reading to him,” she says, adding that the benefits of the program have been far-reaching.

“It helps with conversation and creative writing at school, and he uses his expressions a lot better.”

Optus has enabled *student2student* to be delivered around Australia and we thank Optus for its much-valued support.

Teresa



Teresa is amazed by how much Sebastian's reading has improved.  
Photo: John McCutcheon/Sunshine Coast Daily

# 31,491

secondary school students participating in programs

## 18,074

secondary school students sponsored through *Learning for Life*

## 5,647

secondary school students participating in post-school planning activities, including careers workshops and university experience days

## 2,901

secondary school students participating in *Work Inspiration*

## 1,495

secondary school-aged participants, with 330 tutors in 89 Learning Clubs

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

## SECONDARY YEARS



In 2013, 68% of young people from low socio-economic status (SES) areas completed Year 12, compared with 79% of students from high SES areas.<sup>1</sup>

It is becoming increasingly difficult for unqualified people to get a 'good' job. Early school leavers in particular are likely to be trapped in low-income jobs.<sup>2</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE

The secondary school years, in particular Years 10, 11 and 12 are formative in a teenager's life. During this time, a range of factors can

cause young people to lose interest in their education and drop out of school. Early school leaving limits their chances of a successful transition to work and of achieving positive outcomes later in life.

For students from disadvantaged backgrounds, staying in school to complete Year 12 means overcoming a range of barriers. Unlike younger students, secondary school students are often more aware of the financial strain that education costs place on a family. To lessen this burden, disadvantaged students are more likely to choose subjects where costs are lower, regardless of their interest levels or academic achievement. But opting out of preferred subjects can cause lower engagement in learning and decreased self-esteem and confidence, resulting in poorer school outcomes.

1 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2015, *Report on Government Services 2015*.

2 Foundation for Young Australians 2013, *How Young People Are Faring 2013: The national report on the learning and earning of young Australians*.

3 *Learning Catalysts: Improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged children*, ARC Linkage Grant LP 130100492 led by the Institute of Social Science Research, University of Queensland. This research was supported under the Australian Research Council's Linkage Projects funding scheme.

### CASE STUDY – WORK INSPIRATION

## INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE

Karen



"A life lesson I learned from the people I met during my *Work Inspiration* experience was to never give up on your dreams, keep a strong mindset and not to let anybody ever put you down," says Karen, a participant in The Smith Family's *Work Inspiration* program.

Karen joined 20 other students at a three-day *Work Inspiration* event at global software company, SAP. While hesitant to be out of class for that amount of time, Karen says there was a voice in the back of her mind telling her to attend and that she would regret it if she didn't.

"I wanted to participate to broaden my horizons, to see what opportunities were out there and what I might strive to become. I learned so much through the experience," she says.

"I learned that [many SAP employees] didn't know what they wanted to become in the early stages of their lives, and that their working lives didn't all start off as sunshine and rainbows."

Through the *Work Inspiration* program, each year close to 3,000 students from Smith Family partner and other schools have the opportunity to undertake meaningful work experiences with a range of organisations. Students report that participating in *Work Inspiration* often changes the way they think about the career paths they might follow after school.

"I would recommend other students do *Work Inspiration*. It could open the minds of the professors of the future," says Karen.

*Work Inspiration* is a partnership between the National Australia Bank, the Foundation for Young Australians and The Smith Family.

Karen attended a three-day *Work Inspiration* event at global software company, SAP

There are many young people we support who can see the benefit of completing Year 12, but their circumstances are working against them. This can reduce their motivation to do well at school and affect their aspirations for a better future.

## HOW WE HELP

One in three *Learning for Life* students have reported that they have missed out on at least one important school-related activity – such as a camp, an excursion or an elective subject – because of costs.<sup>3</sup> Through the *Learning for Life* program, sponsors continue to provide financial assistance to ease the burden of school costs on families. In addition, the extra support and tools we provide help disadvantaged students to complete Year 12 (or its equivalent) and go on to a job, further study or training.

Understanding study and career options, and having access to supportive mentors and networks, helps students to improve their chances of a successful transition from school to work. Our *Learning for Life* program coordinators play a key role in connecting

students with opportunities aimed at helping them learn about and experience the range of post-school options available to them.

Our online mentoring program, *iTrack*, matches students in Years 9 to 11 with volunteer mentors who assist students to explore potential career goals and provide guidance about study and career paths. We also provide ways for students to explore their creative or artistic talents through extracurricular enrichment activities. These experiences help students to discover career and study possibilities beyond what they may be exposed to in their personal lives.

Students who have four or more meaningful interactions with employers while at school are more likely to find work and to be paid more than students who don't have these 'career conversations'.<sup>4</sup> Through the *Work Inspiration* program, as well as experiential career days and university campus visits, our partners provide students with opportunities to visit workplaces, speak to employers and employees, and spend time at universities.

Because parents and home life are

among the strongest influencers on a young person's educational achievement, program coordinators also work closely with families.

This targeted support involving students, families and our partners enables a smooth transition from school to work or higher education and training, improving a disadvantaged student's chances of breaking the cycle.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Financial Literacy* programs
- *Girls at the Centre*
- *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project*
- *iTrack*
- Learning Clubs
- Outward Bound Australia's *National Aspiring Leaders Summit*
- *School Community Hubs*
- *SmArts*, including *Bella Art Workshops* and *CONverge*
- *Work Inspiration*

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Greater understanding of available career options
- Increased knowledge regarding pathways to further study/careers

<sup>4</sup> Mann A 2012 *It's who you meet: Why employer contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young adults*

## CASE STUDY – *iTRACK*

### ONE-ON-ONE CAREER GUIDANCE

“Being able to talk about myself and plan my future with my mentor has been a huge help and a lot of fun. It's also been inspiring learning about someone else's life and having a person to guide me through almost everything,” says Mohiba, an *iTrack* participant.

*iTrack* matches students in Years 9 to 11 with a trained adult mentor who helps the student to identify their strengths and gives guidance about their goals and their schooling, career and study options. For an hour each week over two school terms

students communicate with their mentors via an online monitored chatroom.

Mohiba, who wants to join the Australian Defence Force, says her mentor helped her decide on a future career path.

“She told me about her job and sent me links to websites to help me expand my knowledge of different careers. I have been inspired in so many ways. She has helped me make up my mind about my career and guided me to the pathway I have to take to pursue my goals.”

For fellow *iTrack* participant Lauren, her mentor has boosted her confidence and encouraged her to explore the world.

“My mentor has definitely inspired me to get a taste of the world. She helps me with my potential careers and is always being supportive and giving suggestions. She's also given me more confidence when speaking to people,” says Lauren.

For secondary school students like Mohiba and Lauren, encouraging their aspirations and confidence is crucial for their ongoing engagement in learning.



*iTrack* participants Mohiba, 16 (L) and Lauren, 14.  
Photo: *The Examiner*

Mohiba &  
Lauren

# 1,215

tertiary students sponsored through *Learning for Life*

## 334

members of the Young Leaders' Network

## 269

tertiary students in the *Tertiary Mentoring* program

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

## POST-SCHOOL YEARS



Higher education confers significant benefit on individuals in terms of personal development, social standing, career possibilities and lifetime earnings. It is also important for national and community development in producing a more equitable, cohesive and economically successful society.<sup>1</sup>

Tertiary students from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds report feeling less prepared, with greater levels of concern and stress than their peers.<sup>2</sup>

University students from low SES backgrounds are less likely to seek out support from their families or elsewhere, and are more likely to struggle financially and work longer hours.<sup>3</sup>

1 Universities Australia, *Advancing Equity and Participation in Australian Higher Education*, 2008.  
2 Baik, C., et al, 2015, *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities*.  
3 Devlin, M., et al, 2011, *Inclusive Teaching and Support for Students from Low Socioeconomic Status Backgrounds*.



Former *Learning for Life* student Mitchell is now a member of the Young Leaders' Network.

Mitchell

### CASE STUDY – YOUNG LEADERS' NETWORK

## NURTURING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Young Leaders are encouraged to give back to The Smith Family, their community and their peers through activities such as volunteering and speaking at events. This is a leadership path that Mitchell is embracing fully by taking up these opportunities and also through mentoring other students.

Mitchell was born in Australia to Vietnamese immigrant parents fleeing war and poverty. After his parents divorced when he was only two, Mitchell's mother worked in a variety of low-paid jobs to make ends meet.

"When I was little, I wanted to learn how to read and write. Mum's English skills weren't so great back then but she always instilled within me the importance of education."

Programs like The Smith Family's *student2student* program were instrumental in shaping a strong future of learning for Mitchell. Now studying at university to be a teacher, Mitchell feels ready to help others like him.

"The Young Leaders' Network offers opportunities for me to contribute, to talk and to advocate. It allows me to expand my experience with The Smith Family," he says.

"The Smith Family's support and encouragement over more than 10 years has fostered my passion for education," says Mitchell, who is a proud member of The Smith Family's Young Leaders' Network.

The Young Leaders' Network is a group of current and former *Learning for Life* students keen to develop skills as they transition from school to work, or further study. They also gain valuable connections with our partners, their peers and professional networks.



## THE CHALLENGE

Young people from disadvantaged communities who pursue higher education or training often face more difficulties in completing their studies than their more advantaged peers. Many are the first in their family to go to university, but have few adults or role models in their social circle or network to turn to for advice on managing university life, study choices and career guidance. The strain of paying for textbooks and travel as well as the lack of resources to support their tertiary studies, including inadequate technology in the home, creates additional barriers for disadvantaged young people and their families. For some students, taking on paid work to alleviate family financial strain also exacerbates their difficulties.

## HOW WE HELP

Our support in the post-school years is focused on helping tertiary students to continue with and complete their higher education or training, while gaining an understanding of the career options available to them. To help students manage their education-related expenses and relieve some of the financial pressure on families, financial sponsorship is crucial at this life stage. By matching students with volunteer mentors from their field of interest, we ensure disadvantaged young people have access to support, study advice and career guidance otherwise not available through their own social circle or network. This one-on-one support helps students stay engaged and focused on completing their studies.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- Tertiary Mentoring program
- Young Leaders' Network

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Enhanced networks, skills and relationships

### CASE STUDY – TERTIARY MENTORING PROGRAM

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE

Sam &  
Darren



"During my first year of university I met my mentor, Darren. I keep in contact with him still. He's offered me a lot of useful advice and furthermore he's a good friend," says Sam, who recently completed a degree in computer science.

Growing up in a single-parent household, Sam started receiving *Learning for Life* sponsorship from The Smith Family in 2006. The long-term support has helped him become the first in his family to go to university.

In addition to receiving financial assistance to help cover his university costs, in his first year Sam was connected with Darren, an IT and finance professional, as part of the *Tertiary Mentoring* program. The program links tertiary students with a trained volunteer mentor working in their chosen field, who provides support and encouragement, as well as study and career advice.

Darren (L) became Sam's (R) mentor during Sam's first year at university.

Throughout Sam's degree the pair met regularly to chat about working in the IT sector, personal development opportunities and career pathways.

"Studying and the transition to the workforce is a very daunting time for anyone," Darren says.

"We would talk about all sorts of things, sometimes about Sam's course, sometimes about my work. It's been great to see him find himself and really grow in confidence."

For students like Sam, the *Tertiary Mentoring* program provides a positive role model outside their own networks to turn to for advice and encouragement.

"Meeting Darren was a great opportunity. He's been really supportive when I needed it and I'm truly thankful for his help," says Sam.

# 20,469

parents/carers/adults  
participating in programs

## 1,444

Saver Plus program participants  
in 24 locations

## 1,401

parents participating in  
School Community Hubs

## 263

new Home Tutor Scheme  
program participants

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# PARENTS AND CARERS



No matter their income or background, students with parents who are involved in their education are more likely to do well at school, graduate from school and go on to higher education. Parental engagement in learning is a key factor that can help close the gap in achievement between children of different socio-economic backgrounds.<sup>1</sup>

It appears that parents' greatest influence might be on their children's motivation and engagement, their sense of academic competence and self-efficacy, whether they believe education is important, and their broader social and emotional wellbeing.<sup>2</sup>

Results from the OECD's 2012 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed that parents can nurture their children's engagement with school. By having high expectations and communicating these to their children, parents can help to increase school attendance rates.<sup>3</sup>

1 Fox, S. and Olsen, A., 2014, *Defining Parental Engagement*.

2 Op. cit.

3 OECD, 2014, 'Who Are the School Truants', *PISA in Focus*.

## CASE STUDY – PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

### GETTING INVOLVED IN SCHOOL LIFE

Naomi



"It's a priority for me to be involved in my children's education because I want them to have the education I never got the chance to have," says mother-of-three Naomi.

"I want my children to have a positive outlook and be confident at school. It makes me happy knowing they are happy at school."

Students with engaged parents are more likely to do well at school, to graduate and to go on to higher education. That's why The Smith Family helps parents to get involved in supporting their children to thrive at school.

In Morwell and Lakes Entrance in the Gippsland region of Victoria, the *Parental and Community Engagement (PaCE)* program is supporting parents from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

Funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, PaCE offers workshops, forums, education sessions, and digital and financial literacy programs to help parents develop a range of key skills. Workshop topics can include helping children make a smooth transition from primary to secondary school, and navigating the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) at Year 11 and 12 levels.

Naomi completed The Smith Family's *Tech Packs* program, and a VCE workshop through the PaCE program and found the information invaluable in assisting her three children, Dylan, 19, Kyralee, 17, and Destiny, 6. Dylan was the first in his family to complete secondary school. He's now busy studying a traineeship in sport and recreation, while Kyralee is completing Year 12 in 2015.

PaCE program participant Naomi (R) with her children Dylan (L) and Destiny (centre).

## THE CHALLENGE

A parent or carer's involvement in and attitudes towards education, learning and future aspirations strongly affect a disadvantaged student's educational outcomes and success at school. Providing learning opportunities in the home that link to what children learn in the classroom helps a child's development, attendance levels and engagement at school. In lower socio-economic status communities, factors such as financial hardship, low income, low education levels, high unemployment, and poor literacy and numeracy skills are prevalent.

Engaging parents to support their children's education effectively can be difficult for schools and teachers. A parent's understanding of how to support their children's academic achievement can limit their ability to be a positive influence. Their own negative experiences of school, the level of importance they place on education, and a lack of basic skills can affect a child's overall learning and their ability to realise their potential.

## HOW WE HELP

Raising parental awareness of the benefits of getting involved in their children's education is important. Providing extra help, support and skills, so they can play an active role in their child's educational journey from early on, is crucial.

In addition to providing financial assistance so families can afford school essentials, a *Learning for Life* sponsorship is underpinned by an agreement with parents and carers about children's regular school attendance. It also actively encourages them to be involved with their children's education.

Our programs and support connect parents to their local community and to schools so they can positively influence their children's time at school and what they achieve there. *Let's Read* and *Let's Count* support parents to develop literacy and maths skills in young children. *Tech Packs*, our digital literacy program, provides disadvantaged families with an internet-connected computer, and with training and support so disadvantaged students have study resources in the home.

Programs such as *Financial Literacy* and *Saver Plus* teach parents basic skills about managing their money to help with home life.

Our support helps parents and carers to develop their skills, confidence and knowledge so they can effectively support their child's learning throughout their school years.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Certificate I Financial Services*
- *Home Tutor Scheme*
- *Let's Count*
- *Let's Read*
- *Parent and Community Engagement*
- *Saver Plus*
- *School Community Hubs*
- *Tech Packs*

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Improved confidence and increased self-efficacy
- Enhanced networks and relationships
- Improved knowledge and understanding

## CASE STUDY – SAVER PLUS

### SAVING FOR EDUCATION

"Being a single parent of two young children and working part-time, we were always facing very strained finances. But that all changed when a friend of mine recommended *Saver Plus*, because that's where I learnt how to budget properly," says Danelle, a *Saver Plus* graduate.

*Saver Plus* is Australia's largest and longest-running matched savings and financial education program, offered by The Smith Family in 24 locations across Australia. It helps participants to develop positive money

management skills and to save towards their own, or their children's, educational goals.

Danelle's story is typical of many who are involved in *Saver Plus*.

"The main thing is that it has encouraged me to get back into the habit of saving, and reminded me about the advantages of budgeting," Danelle says.

"I was also given advice about superannuation that I didn't know anything about before – that was invaluable."

Through the *Saver Plus* program, the ANZ bank will match a participant's savings dollar-for-dollar if they save \$500 in 10 months. This further motivated Danelle to save the \$500 and be rewarded with the extra money that helped her purchase uniforms and stationery for her school-aged children.

"Without a doubt the money has been very helpful. *Saver Plus* is a great program."

In the past year, 1,444 participants have taken part in the program through The Smith Family.

*Saver Plus* is an initiative of The Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ. Funded by ANZ and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services, it is delivered in partnership with Berry Street, The Benevolent Society, The Smith Family and other local community agencies.

Danelle

Danelle has learned how to budget through *Saver Plus*.



# 42,410

participants supported through government funding for community programs

## 9

Communities for Children Facilitating Partner sites in NSW, NT, QLD, VIC and WA supporting 17,260 children aged from birth to 12 years; 761 aged 13 to 17 years; 12,868 parents and 2,871 community professionals

## 6,775

participants in *School Community Hubs*, made up of 1,181 younger children, 3,822 school-aged participants, 1,401 parents and 371 community professionals

## 48

cross-sectoral partnerships brokered by the *School Business Community Partnership Brokers* program

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

# WORKING WITH COMMUNITY

Attitudes, relationships and decisions in the wider community also have a powerful influence on what students can get from their education and on which resources a school can access. Building stronger relationships with the communities that surround schools leads to higher student achievement.<sup>1</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE

The Smith Family works in some of Australia's most disadvantaged communities, many of which are often characterised by low education levels, high unemployment, poor facilities and infrastructure, and limited job prospects for young people. Disadvantage is entrenched in families and communities and can persist over time to affect multiple generations.

For young people growing up in these areas, the lack of educational and employment opportunities, as well as limited learning support in their home or wider community, makes it hard for them to envisage what their future could be. Communities, schools and local services need to work collaboratively to provide resources to support the educational outcomes of young people.

<sup>1</sup> Bentley, T. and Cazaly, C., 2015, *The Standard Work of Learning: Lifting educational achievement through collaboration*.

### CASE STUDY – SCHOOL COMMUNITY HUB

## CONNECTING SCHOOLS AND PARENTS

We recognise the important role played jointly by parents and schools in achieving educational outcomes for disadvantaged students. Our *School Community Hubs* build strong connections between families, schools and their communities.

Our hubs operate in many disadvantaged communities, including Wyndham, in the outer south-west of Melbourne, where we work with three schools to engage parents.

Parental engagement is difficult here due to the complex needs of the area's disadvantaged families and the many cultural and language barriers of the multicultural community.

At Wyndham Park Primary, we help parents to access skills-building programs and develop relationships with others in the school community.

Recently a series of interactive parent information sessions about the transition to prep school has helped improve engagement with parents of students starting school for the first time. The sessions were run by The Smith Family in collaboration with partner agencies and focused on helping parents to get to know each other.

Once the school year began, weekly morning-tea workshops helped to strengthen the bonds and enabled the school to maintain positive engagement with this group. Training in parental engagement, also delivered by The Smith Family, has supported teachers to directly involve parents in classroom activities as well.

"The partnership between The Smith Family and Wyndham Park Primary is foundational to the success of parental engagement in our school. The collaborative nature has ensured that parent activities undertaken are sustainable and of long-term benefit to the community," says Laban Toose, Principal at Wyndham Park Primary.



Parents from Wyndham Park Primary school attend an excursion to discover free school holiday activities in the city.

## HOW WE HELP

We are strongly engaged with parents and community professionals in disadvantaged communities, even before a child starts school and right throughout their educational journey. Our programs offer practical skills and resources to support learning and development in children from an early age. We create links between students, parents and schools to promote higher levels of school attendance and closer parental engagement with schools.

Initiatives such as *School Community Hubs* and our *Child and Parent Centres* bring together primary and secondary schools, local agencies and community services. We develop partnerships to help parents manage and overcome barriers that hinder their ability to support their child's attendance at school and engagement with their learning.

As the Government's facilitating partner in nine *Communities for Children* sites, we work collaboratively with local providers. Our work supports the delivery of resources and programs for children aged from birth to 12 years old, and for parents. We leverage local resources and infrastructure, and build partnerships with stakeholders across education and training, business, industry, government and the community sector.

This wraparound support for a disadvantaged child's education involves the child, their parents, school and community, and creates the best chance of overcoming intergenerational disadvantage.

## HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Child and Parent Centre*
- *Communities for Children*
- *Parent and Community Engagement*
- *School Community Hubs*

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Improved service collaboration and integration
- Increased access to and use of community resources
- Enhanced cross-sectoral partnerships

## CASE STUDY – COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

### SUPPORTING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

"Enterprise Learning Projects (ELP) is helping us to make things happen for the young ones, for all of us, so we all have things to do that make us happy," says Samara Billy, who participates in ELP's microbusiness project in Minyerri, Northern Territory.

ELP is a social enterprise supporting Aboriginal people living in remote communities. It helps them to explore and develop business ideas for community development. Through the Australian Government's *Communities for Children Facilitating Partner* (CFCFP) initiative,

The Smith Family has been working with ELP and the Minyerri community since 2011.

The CFCFP is a whole-of-community initiative that enhances the development and wellbeing of children aged from birth to 12 years. The Smith Family has been the facilitating partner for this initiative in the Katherine region since 2005.

In response to the unique needs and aspirations of families in Minyerri, through the CFCFP The Smith Family funds ELP to deliver its Grassroots Microenterprise Facilitation project. This project focuses on engaging a whole family in enterprise activities, offering a sustainable approach to improving outcomes for children and families.

"The support provided by The Smith Family has been pivotal to the ongoing success of our partnership with the Minyerri community. The community has achieved tremendous outcomes to date. A growing number of people are becoming involved as they observe the positive impact this is having on their community," says Laura Egan, founder and CEO of ELP.

*Communities for Children Facilitating Partner* is funded by the Australian Government and delivered in 52 communities across Australia.



The Smith Family has been working in the Minyerri community since 2011.



# 14,405

participants in programs who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

## 5,981

students sponsored through *Learning for Life* who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

## 5,227

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in *Communities for Children*

## 168

participants in the *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project*

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

## OUR WORK WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are less likely than their non-Indigenous peers to attend early education programs.

In 2014, 74% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were attending an early education program, compared to 99% of non-Indigenous children.<sup>1</sup>

In 2013, Indigenous attendance rates in government schools were lower than non-Indigenous rates for each jurisdiction and all grades from Year 1 to 10.<sup>2</sup>

In 2011, the proportion of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people (aged

17–24) not fully engaged in work or study after leaving school was 61%, more than double the rate among non-Indigenous young people (26%).<sup>3</sup>

The current gaps in educational outcomes limit the post-school options of Aboriginal young people, perpetuating intergenerational cycles of disadvantage.<sup>4</sup>

### THE CHALLENGE

Closing the gap between the educational and life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peers is a significant issue for communities, educational providers and governments.

1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2015, *Children's Headline Indicators*.

2 Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision, 2014, *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2014*.

3 COAG Reform Council, *Education in Australian 2012: Five years of performance*.

4 Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australian, 2015, *Using the Wellbeing Monitoring Framework to Strengthen Children and Young People's Wellbeing*.



Sunita has participated in the *Girls at the Centre* program for three years.

Sunita

### CASE STUDY – GIRLS AT THE CENTRE

## HELPING ABORIGINAL GIRLS STAY IN SCHOOL

"I love being a part of *Girls at the Centre*. I would be so lonely at school without this program, and if it wasn't here I don't think I would come to school as much," says Year 9 student Sunita.

The Smith Family, in partnership with Centralian Middle School in Alice Springs, has run *Girls at the Centre* since 2008. The program motivates and supports Aboriginal girls in Years 7 to 9 to stay at school, plan for their futures and boost their educational achievements.

Sunita has been part of the program for three years. "When I started Year 7, I felt really shy and was too scared to go to class. Then I met the coaches from *Girls at the Centre*. They came with me to class, sat with me and helped me with my work. In break times I went to the girls' room [part of the program offering] where I felt comfortable and safe. The coaches helped me to talk to people and helped me make friends. They made it so much easier for me."

Being on the program has helped Sunita grow in many ways. Her peers and teachers have noticed a visible difference in her confidence and engagement at school.

"The coaches encourage me to come to school every day and to work hard. They talk with me about my future, help me in my classes, and now I have a lot more confidence. When I grow up I think I might like to be a policewoman so I can make everyone safe."

Students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds are well behind other young Australians in school attendance, retention and educational achievement. These students also face a range of additional challenges that affect their ability to reach their potential.

Young women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, in particular, deal with significant factors in their home life and their communities. These include poverty, early pregnancy and limited access to education. These factors reduce their chances of completing Year 12. Research suggests that by increasing the educational outcomes achieved by these young women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities will benefit significantly along with the young women themselves.

#### HOW WE HELP

Our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students focuses on supporting not only the children, but also their families and communities. Involving parents, schools and communities helps to build the wellbeing of all. We work in collaboration with these

groups to positively influence students' educational outcomes.

Increased educational participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children supported by positive learning experiences and access to role models is a major contributor to improved educational outcomes.

Positive learning experiences help to increase school attendance and keep young people engaged with their education. Through programs such as *Girls at the Centre* and the *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project*, we nurture young students by offering educational opportunities, access to mentors and role models, leadership development, and experiences outside their local community. This support helps them to learn about the study and career paths available to them, develop aspirations for their future and to realise their potential.

We are committed to the reconciliation journey. Our vision is that our nation can become a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can fully benefit from the education and learning opportunities that Australia has to offer and will be truly valued

as the First People of Australia. Guided by our Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–16, our second public commitment to the reconciliation process, we continue to be focused on building positive and respectful relationships through effective engagement. In this endeavour we are grateful for the support and guidance provided by our Advisory Group on issues concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

By collaborating closely with families and communities through the programs and assistance we can offer, we are supporting the empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### HIGHLIGHT PROGRAMS

- *Girls at the Centre*
- *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project*
- *Keeping Indigenous Kids at Secondary School*

#### PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- Improved confidence, skills, knowledge and understanding
- Improved school attendance

#### CASE STUDY – INDIGENOUS YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROJECT

### NURTURING COMMUNITY LEADERS

Matthew



“The *Indigenous Youth Leadership Project* (IYLP) is important to me because it is giving me the opportunities to make good career choices and to better my life. What that means for me is this: one day I can go back to my community and help others,” says Matthew, who attends a high-performing, independent school with support from The Smith Family.

Matthew grew up in Indulkana, a remote community in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands in South Australia. In 2014 he began boarding at Adelaide’s Westminster College through IYLP, and is now one of 168 students receiving support through The Smith Family.

IYLP is funded by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attend high-achieving academic secondary schools to further their education.

Through IYLP, Matthew has built his leadership skills.

“If I stayed in Indulkana there would have been a limited choice of subjects. Back home opportunities are very rare. I don’t think I would be able to get through Year 12 at home. Being here is helping me reach my goal.”

Through IYLP, Matthew has also had the opportunity to do work experience with the Australian Army to build his leadership skills and career aspirations.

By creating educational opportunities for young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where resources are limited, IYLP helps develop positive community role models who go on to inspire younger students to succeed at school.

“I can see myself working as a police officer, hopefully on the APY Lands. I would like to reduce domestic violence, and alcohol and drug use.”



## GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE CONFIDENCE

"I really enjoy being a part of the program because I'm with my friends and we learn heaps and it helps me to make good connections with people," says Sharna, a *Learning for Life* student.

Sharna is in Year 10 and has been supported through *Learning for Life* since her father became chronically ill and was no longer able to work.

The financial assistance Sharna's family receives goes towards the school essentials she needs to participate fully in her education. Access to targeted learning and support programs offered by The Smith Family also helps Sharna stay motivated at school despite her father's illness.

Last year Sharna and her mum Judy participated in the *Magarra Malungan* – or *Bright Young Women* – program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls at her high school. The Smith Family delivered this program in response to the school's concerns about Aboriginal students' engagement at school and their attendance and retention prospects. The program provided Sharna with information about her post-school options, including practical skills such as university and TAFE enrolment processes, and rights and responsibilities in the workforce. Her confidence also grew with the additional support.

"I know what I want to do after school – I want to go to NAISDA [National Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association] in Gosford and study dance – but I will definitely finish Year 12 first. I know it's important."



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2**  
TO BE AN INFLUENTIAL ADVOCATE FOR  
DISADVANTAGED YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

# **SUPPORTING OUR ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

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## RESEARCH

Our work is making a lasting difference to the lives of students and families in need.

We are tracking the progress of more than 34,000 *Learning for Life* sponsorship students from the day they join our program to 12 months after they leave. We are monitoring our progress against three longer-term outcomes: school attendance, Year 12 completion rates, and post-school engagement in education, training or employment.

The long-term support provided through sponsorship allows us to assess these key outcomes over time and across students' demographic characteristics, backgrounds and location. This analysis helps us to understand the effectiveness of our work. It allows us to identify different groups of students, such as secondary school students, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students or those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, so we can understand their particular challenges and shape our work to better support them.

Combined with evaluation of the short-term outcomes of our programs, this in-depth research gives us a richer understanding of

the students and families we support, the unique challenges they face, and how our sponsorship and learning and mentoring programs can help them break the cycle of disadvantage. It informs our approach at every life stage so we can be sure that our work is changing outcomes for families.

This analysis is nationally significant and unique, given the large number of disadvantaged young people involved and the long-term nature of their participation on *Learning for Life*. As such it can help influence policy aimed at improving the educational outcomes of disadvantaged Australians.

The recent three-year evaluation of our early maths program, *Let's Count*, is a good example of why our research is so important. In this longitudinal study, conducted in collaboration with Professor Bob Perry (Charles Sturt University) and Professor Ann Gervasoni (Monash University), we assessed the effectiveness of the program for young children, their parents and carers, and the early childhood educators who participated. The findings in our report clearly showed that the program significantly boosted the mathematical skills and dispositions of children who took part. The results also showed that the parents and educators who participated were more able

and confident to support the mathematical learning of their children.

In the light of Australia's increased focus on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) as critical skills for employment and the development of our nation, our report generated significant external interest from a range of stakeholders. With the knowledge that this approach to early maths learning for young children is effective, there is now significant scope to expand the program to support many more disadvantaged children.

Progress was made on five Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage grant projects which had been awarded in previous years. These are large, long-term, nationally significant research projects focused on improving the wellbeing of children and young people. Topics include *Communities for Children* and collective impact; community-level factors that influence early childhood outcomes; the efficacy of the *Learning for Life* program; young people's experience of financial disadvantage; and supporting Aboriginal children's early language development.

This year, one of these Linkage grants enabled us to complete a survey of 6,000 *Learning for Life* students and their parents and carers to gather information on a range

### CASE STUDY – LET'S COUNT RESEARCH REPORT

## EARLY MATHEMATICS PROGRAM BOOSTS SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

Sue with her children (L-R) Kaydence, 5; Danion, 3; and Braith, 4. Photo: Liam Kidston/Newspix



“My three youngest children now spontaneously use maths every day and they are so excited and proud to show me what they have learned,” says Sue, a mother of seven and *Let's Count* early maths program participant.

Results from a three-year evaluation of *Let's Count*, show that the program is having a significant impact on the mathematical skills and dispositions of participating children. A comparison of children's results before and after involvement in *Let's Count* shows strong growth across a wide range of mathematical areas.

The report, *Strengthening early numeracy learning: The Let's Count program*, also showed that parents and early childhood educators who participated felt more confident to support the mathematical learning of the children in their care.

*Let's Count* gives young children early exposure to mathematics, including

counting, measurement, patterns and spatial awareness. The program includes training, support and learning resources for families and early childhood educators.

“*Let's Count* helped me understand how easy it is to integrate basic maths learning opportunities into the home and when we are out,” says Sue.

“I found the program very inclusive. Simple ideas such as counting groceries when putting away the shopping, finding shapes in objects like windows in buildings, or patterns with plants in garden beds were really good to learn. *Let's Count* helped my daughter Kaydence, aged 5, prepare for school.”

The *Let's Count* program was developed by The Smith Family with Professor Bob Perry (Charles Sturt University) and Professor Ann Gervasoni (Monash University). Its significant expansion and comprehensive evaluation were made possible through financial support from the Origin Foundation.

of family characteristics and perspectives. This included the level of health issues experienced by students and families, as well as student mobility and their post-school plans. The findings will enable us to keep refining the support we provide and inform our advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged children and young people.

Involving a range of academic, government and non-government partners, the total value of the Linkage projects is conservatively estimated at over \$7.8 million. Our Linkage grants provide significant benefits including the opportunity to engage with senior government officials, other non-government organisations and international researchers.

## ADVOCACY

Through our programs, we support the education of thousands of disadvantaged students and young people to help them break the cycle of disadvantage.

However, due to the extent of disadvantage in Australian communities, this direct support only reaches some, and alone is insufficient

to achieve our vision of a better future for all young Australians. There is a range of factors including government policy, the design and delivery of education, community attitudes, and the availability of philanthropic and corporate investment, that also affect the wellbeing and life outcomes of children and young people.

This is why our role as an advocate for disadvantaged children and young people is critical. We give a voice to the young people in our communities, and seek to influence decision-makers and broaden the impact of our support. Through a variety of advocacy activities, including publishing research reports, making submissions to government inquiries, presenting at conferences, speaking to the media and engaging with key government agencies, politicians, non-government organisations and the wider community, we contribute to improving the lives of all disadvantaged young Australians.

This year we made 10 public policy submissions and our team members presented at 18 forums and conferences such as the NSW Principals Conference, the Rural Education Conference, Not-For-Profit People Conference and the Measuring Social Outcomes Conference. Our Head of Research and Advocacy was invited to join an expert panel hosted by the Grattan

Institute to discuss the importance of STEM for young Australians.

Two research reports were published: one on the findings of the *Let's Count* program evaluation and the other on youth transitions from school to work. We were also invited to write two chapters in external publications, including a chapter about the *Learning for Life* program for the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) report on *Addressing Entrenched Disadvantage*. The other chapter focused on vulnerable young people and was published in an international book.

We generated extensive media coverage on a range of issues related to our mission, such as educational achievement, school attendance, parental engagement, early intervention and the importance of early mathematics.

A more systematic approach to government relations was implemented and has helped to build positive engagement with all levels of government including departmental staff and Members of Parliament. Our core focus of this strategy has been to have a tangible influence on government policies and spending priorities related to education and young people.

### CASE STUDY – YOUTH TRANSITIONS RESEARCH

## SUPPORT FOR TRANSITION TO WORK

Disadvantaged young Australians need comprehensive support to make a successful transition to work after they leave school.

The Smith Family's research report, *Young people's successful transition to work: What are the pre-conditions?* draws on research from key stakeholders, including young people, employers and educators to identify the challenges faced by those entering today's complex and constantly changing labour market.

"Young people have been disproportionately affected by the major changes that have occurred across the Australian labour market over the last 20 years," says Anne Hampshire, Head of Research and Advocacy at The Smith Family.

Despite the complexity and challenges, there is a body of evidence that identifies the preconditions for young people making successful transitions to work and how they can be developed.

"For young people to be positively engaged in the labour market, they need stable economic supports and opportunities to improve their job readiness and employability skills. Regular opportunities to visit workplaces and make connections to employers and employees are important. Supportive relationships and networks are also beneficial. These networks are particularly useful for helping young people to develop and implement career goals."

*Work Inspiration* is one program helping to equip young people more effectively for the world of work. Participants meet with employers and experience a variety of roles, learning about what skills, personal qualities and qualifications are needed to perform these jobs.

"*Work Inspiration* is a great opportunity to find out about the many different jobs there are throughout the community," said Ashley, a *Work Inspiration* participant.

*Work Inspiration* is a partnership between the National Australia Bank, the Foundation for Young Australians and The Smith Family.

*Work Inspiration* participants (L-R) Tahlia, Evelyn, Ashley and Adam work on their project.  
Photo: Burnie Advocate





Barbara  
and Alan

## GIVING WITH PURPOSE

"In 2003, I got my first *Learning for Life* student, and then, in 2006, my wife Barbara and I set up our foundation to give regular annual donations. Our aim was to help disadvantaged children," explains Alan, a Smith Family major donor.

Alan now sponsors five students on the *Learning for Life* program and finds regular correspondence with each student motivating and rewarding. Twice a year he sends each student personalised handmade photographic cards with carefully thought out messages and advice.

"I send them a card and gift voucher at the start of the academic year to give them motivation and so they can buy things for school. I also send another card on their birthday. I read their student profiles very closely to try to detect their interests so I can give them a photo that's going to be relevant to them. I find that quite rewarding."

Alan also likes to include a motivational one-liner to inspire the students. One of his favourites is: "Always have your eyes up, always look at the horizon. If you can see the horizon, you know there's a future."

Through their foundation, Alan and Barbara also give a regular annual donation to support The Smith Family's learning and mentoring programs. The Smith Family is one of eight charities currently supported by the couple in this way. Alan says choosing well-managed charities where they can see their donation is being well spent, and having a personal relationship with each organisation, is important to them.

"The Smith Family is made up of real people. I feel that their heart is in their job. It makes a big difference to know that the people are really sincere with their work."

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3**  
TO CONNECT THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY  
WITH THE PLIGHT OF DISADVANTAGED  
YOUNG AUSTRALIANS AND ENGAGE THEM  
TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION

**STRATEGIC  
INVESTMENT  
DELIVERING A  
LIFELONG BENEFIT**

---

Australians are engaging strongly with our purpose to help disadvantaged children to succeed at school so they can create better futures for themselves. And as our supporter numbers grow, in turn we can reach more children in need.

We thank the 20,410 sponsors, 103,632 donors, 8,711 volunteers, 16,672 VIEW Club members and our 248 business partners, including corporate partners, universities, and trusts and foundations that supported us this year. These individuals and groups sponsor children in need, donate funds for programs, collaborate on our projects and research, or volunteer their time for our work. All of this support is crucial.

Our five-year fundraising strategy, rolled out from 2013, continued to provide a framework for our engagement. Communicating the impact of supporter investments in our work is critical. Improvements in the longer-term outcome measures we are tracking for the students we support, specific program evaluations, research reports and the firsthand accounts of our students and families, all demonstrate our ability to create lasting change.

As would be expected, we were vigilant in containing our infrastructure costs this year. Our aim is to ensure that the majority of the funds so generously donated goes towards improving outcomes for disadvantaged young Australians.



Learning for Life student Jessica (L), whose story is featured in our short film *Jess & the Mighty Journey* with Smith Family ambassador, Sarah Harris.

## ENGAGING SUPPORTERS

With 70% of our fundraising income coming from non-government sources, nurturing relationships with supporters is important for long-term sustainability. We continued to invest in and improve the way we communicate in key channels and this supported the overall growth in regular giving and in major donor giving in 2014–15. There are now 149,425 total supporters, up from 133,442 in 2013–14.

In 2014–15, more than 500,000 current and prospective supporters visited our website [thesmithfamily.com.au](http://thesmithfamily.com.au), a 28% increase on the previous year. Reflecting the community's growing use of mobile technology, the number of visitors accessing the site from their mobile increased by 150%. Donations made via mobile devices increased 146% on the previous year. Our website, which has been optimised for mobile use, is the major channel for directly interacting with the public and supporters and is increasingly important for enabling donations.

An independent national survey of 2,400 Australians placed The Smith Family in the top ten of most trusted charity brands. With trust in charities a key factor influencing public support, this result was important. To attract new audiences, our animated film, *Jess & the Mighty Journey*, was promoted online, reaching 3.2 million individuals across multiple channels and attracting nearly 9,000 likes, comments and shares on Facebook. Our much-valued partnership with the Prime Media Group saw the airing of a National Appeal Day for The Smith Family across their regional television network in December, as well as ongoing support throughout the year.

Journalist and television presenter Sarah Harris was welcomed as our new ambassador. Sarah helped promote The Smith Family across multiple media channels and was a popular speaker, especially among *Learning for Life* students attending our events.

# INDIVIDUALS

## SPONSORS

As at June 2015, 20,410 sponsors were investing in a disadvantaged student's education through our *Learning for Life* program, with 92% of sponsors continuing their sponsorship from the previous year.

This year sponsors benefited from the launch of our web self-service portal, *My Smith Family*. This enabled fast and easy access to password-protected supporter communications and student profiles, and facilitated correspondence with sponsored students, the latter exchanged via our sponsorship team to maintain privacy between the parties.

*My Smith Family* was launched in May 2015, and by the end of June 2,600 supporters had registered to access the portal.



The *My Smith Family* self-service portal for supporters launched in May 2015.

## DONORS

Most of our donors are individuals who give a regular monthly donation, contribute to our appeals or raise funds through our fundraising events. Funds raised through these donation channels are critical in maintaining our learning and mentoring programs. Our programs help students keep up with their classmates at school, broaden their experiences and develop aspirations for their futures.

Keeping donors fully informed about what they make possible through their support is vital. After analysing the results of a survey sent to over 20,000 recipients, we refreshed our *Family News* e-newsletter and the new approach resulted in increased readership levels immediately.

Our monthly regular giving program has been promoted through face-to-face fundraising since 2013. This year 9,996 new 'champions' joined The Smith Family, donating towards our programs, such as *student2student*. Regular ongoing donations give us the ability to forecast income and plan activities in advance to best support disadvantaged students and families.

Each year, our appeals raise valuable funds for our programs with the Christmas Appeal generating \$3.4 million from individuals, and the Winter Appeal \$3.4 million by 30 June 2015. Our appeals were also generously supported by our corporate partners ANZ, BOQ, Horizon Power and Officeworks, which promoted them to their customers. Media companies Prime Media Group, Australian Radio Network, Fairfax Radio Network, Fairfax Syndication, oOh! Media and Southern Cross Austereo provided pro-bono opportunities that allowed us to reach a higher number of Australians with our messages.

In recognition of the importance of major donors to our ongoing sustainability, in recent years we have invested in specialist major donor management. During the year \$4.4 million in gifts were received from our major donors, both new and existing. Support from these generous individuals was applied to communities of high need and to specific programs.

We were also very appreciative of an increase in the generosity of those leaving gifts in wills to The Smith Family, with bequests received during the year totalling \$4.8 million (compared to \$3.4 million the previous year). For the first time we surveyed our supporters about what they need to know as they consider leaving a gift in their will to a charity, so that we can better inform and support them.

## CORPORATE PARTNERS, TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS, AND UNIVERSITIES

The Smith Family believes in partnership as a means of creating lasting value, program innovation and organisational sustainability in support of our work.

We are very grateful for the continued support of all our partners and this year we were delighted to welcome a number of significant new corporate partners, including Orica and Mirvac.

Increasingly businesses engage with charities on a shared value basis. Significant macro-economic and social considerations are at play; in supporting The Smith Family, for example, our partners are improving

children's educational outcomes over the long-term, making for a more educated, prosperous workforce in the future.

We look to develop partnerships with value that allow strategic business needs to be met. These include staff engagement and talent recruitment, as well as brand enhancement. In our first corporate partner survey conducted in April, our partners highlighted these needs as important elements in choosing to partner with The Smith Family. Also highlighted was the value of the range and depth of volunteering opportunities we offer. The interaction with our students and our activities helps employees understand that they, and their workplace, are creating positive change for children in our community.

We are proud to recognise our 25-year partnership with Colgate-Palmolive. Over a quarter of a century, \$5 million in corporate and staff contributions have helped fund our *Learning for Life* program in four communities. Colgate-Palmolive's cause-related marketing campaigns have broadened the reach of our messages, and its employees have volunteered for

our programs, including Careers Days. The latter has helped our students appreciate the range of options available to them in the workplace. We thank Colgate-Palmolive for its ongoing support.

The delivery of shared value is apparent in our partnerships with Officeworks (see case study) and Optus. We have worked closely with Optus on a long-term strategic plan for the partnership, which has seen the company provide capacity-building expertise to develop a social enterprise, as well as crucial financial, product and technical support. Optus is our major corporate partner for our *student2student* reading program, supporting its delivery via the Optus network, mobile phones and SIM cards, and enabling students to substantially improve their reading age.

Our corporate partners provide further unique opportunities for our work.

Three years of support from the Origin Foundation culminated this year in an evaluation of our *Let's Count* early maths program. They also supported the development of *Let's Count at Work*, a customised version of the program for employees.

### CASE STUDY – CORPORATE PARTNERS

## MAKING BIGGER THINGS HAPPEN

Dr Lisa O'Brien (L) pictured with *Learning for Life* student Juliana and Mark Ward, the Managing Director of Officeworks.



“Officeworks is all about helping people achieve their big ideas and making bigger things happen. We believe that starts with education so we are passionate about community involvement and helping The Smith Family achieve its goal of ensuring every disadvantaged child has the tools and resources they need for school,” says Officeworks Managing Director Mark Ward.

A shared belief in the importance of education has seen the partnership between Officeworks and The Smith Family evolve over many years, with The Smith Family now the stationery supplier's national principal partner.

One of the ways Officeworks supports The Smith Family is during the annual Back to School fundraising campaign. Every store sells stationery-shaped donation cards that customers place on the front window of Officeworks stores to show their support for The Smith Family. In the 2015 Appeal, Officeworks contributed more than \$90,000 to The Smith Family through the sale of these donor cards and online donations.

But the partnership goes far beyond this campaign. In 2014–15, Officeworks contributed more than 550 volunteering hours to The Smith Family via the Toy and Book Appeal, skilled mentoring and other activities.

“Our partnership with The Smith Family really gives us an opportunity to give back to the community. It's something that our team members are really passionate about,” says Mark.

Throughout the year, Officeworks also donates stationery stock, which is passed on to students in need through Learning Clubs and other initiatives that support the educational needs of disadvantaged students.

With such great successes to date, the partnership promises to continue growing, with a number of initiatives planned for the future.



Our partnership with Microsoft supported our investment in critical IT infrastructure and enabled hundreds of disadvantaged students to learn about coding in a series of #WeSpeakCode workshops.

Through participation in *Work Inspiration* at the workplace of our partner SAP, students gained insight into the world of work when SAP staff offered much-appreciated careers and workplace advice.

Australian-owned fashion retailer, Blue Illusion ran national shopping days to raise funds for our work while promoting VIEW Clubs of Australia.

We saw continued support and steady growth in funding from our philanthropic partners. We were awarded close to \$1 million through Perpetual's IMPACT Philanthropy Partnerships initiative for a capacity-building project. Strategic investments such as this support the sustainability and effectiveness of our organisation, while also facilitating our growth strategy.

In addition to funding *Learning for Life* sponsorships and communities, our university partners offer unique opportunities for disadvantaged students to build their skills, confidence and engagement through experiences such as campus visits, mentoring opportunities and creative extracurricular programs. Our engagement with universities also supports the development of important research to benefit our work. This year we renewed five partnerships with universities: Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology, the University of Melbourne, University of the Sunshine Coast and University of Technology Sydney.

This year The Smith Family's CEO, Dr Lisa O'Brien, was appointed the inaugural chair of the Charity Task Force, an initiative of the Australian Charities Fund. The aim is to increase employer awareness of, and participation in, workplace giving. We thank all our partners who made workplace giving available to their staff and who encouraged others to get involved as well.

## EVENT PARTICIPANTS

Thank you to the many hundreds of Australians who this year raised funds or increased awareness on our behalf. In addition to participating in smaller community activities, hundreds got involved in our three major fundraising events (below). Additionally, the annual gala event, *Neighbours4Charity*, was again a success, raising \$90,000 for children in need. We are grateful for the commitment of all our event participants, and thank them on behalf of the children and families we support.



### BUPA AROUND THE BAY

Our 21st year as the official charity partner for Bicycle Network's *Bupa Around the Bay* one-day cycling event in Melbourne was celebrated in 2014. In that time over \$9 million has been raised for our work with disadvantaged students. This year, riders raised more than \$1 million to help students in need. Thank you Bicycle Network and to everyone who participated in the event and raised funds. Particular congratulations go to trophy winners Team Form 700, as the top fundraising team with \$65,000, and the individual fundraising winner, CEO of Aon, Lambros Lambrou, who raised an incredible \$33,000.

### TOY AND BOOK APPEAL

For many of the families we support, finding money to buy even a single gift for their children at Christmas simply isn't possible. At this special time of the year we remember our founding story, once again collecting new toys and books to deliver to disadvantaged families. In 2014, 1,492 volunteers gave their time to pack 11,926 gift packs delivered to 5,409 families across Australia. Generous in-kind warehousing and logistical support was provided by the Adelaide Showground, Border Express, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne Showground, Omnilink Data Mapping and the Sydney Showground. We thank all those who help us bring joy to the children we support at Christmas.

### THE SMITH FAMILY CHALLENGE

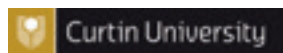
Now in its eighth year, this annual multi-day wilderness race has been led since its inception by Paul Tobin, a former Smith Family Board director. In March, 35 willing participants took up the challenge to hike, paddle and cycle a 100-kilometre course set on the NSW Central Coast. Together they raised a remarkable \$472,000 for children supported through *Learning for Life*. Thank you to all the entrants, supporters and committee members who made the event possible.

### THANK YOU PAUL AND SARAH TOBIN

Paul Tobin stepped down as a Smith Family Board Member in June 2015 to move to the United States with his family. In addition to his role on our Board, Paul has made an outstanding philanthropic contribution to The Smith Family. An incredible \$2.6 million has been raised by participants in The Smith Family Challenge event since 2008, including close to \$160,000 by Paul alone. Paul and his wife Sarah, and a dedicated group of volunteers from among their friends, have raised \$550,000 through their annual *Neighbours for Charity* gala event since 2007. Together, Paul and Sarah have been role models of philanthropy through their actions and, on behalf of the young people they've supported, we thank them most sincerely. Their legacy will be reflected in the life outcomes of these students.

# THANK YOU

We are grateful to all our partners for your continued investment in the futures of disadvantaged Australian children.



KING & WOOD  
MALLESONS



Northcote Trust



Santos



# 8,711

volunteers in 2014–15

## 94%

of surveyed volunteers said they would talk positively to family, friends and colleagues about their volunteering experience at The Smith Family

## 5,054

volunteers in program support

## 1,031

administration supporters (including 109 providing specialised volunteer support)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

## VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteer workforce is an essential and highly valued part of our community. This year, 8,711 volunteers contributed 516,750 hours of service. Without this generous donation of time, we could not continue providing educational support to disadvantaged students and their families.

Over half our volunteers directly support disadvantaged students as trained mentors, tutors and reading buddy supervisors. Other volunteers facilitate program delivery by assisting our team members, while specialised volunteers provide vital expertise for key organisational projects. This year,

94% of surveyed volunteers said they would talk positively about their experience to family, friends and colleagues. This indicates the quality of our engagement with these important supporters.

This year we completed a restructure of our centralised volunteer management model. Our aim was to ensure its ongoing effectiveness for recruiting, screening and managing volunteers, helping to ensure each person has a rewarding experience during their volunteering.

We continued to coordinate a variety of meaningful volunteering opportunities for staff from our corporate partners, to engage them in our work. These volunteers make a significant contribution and we thank our corporate partners for enabling their staff to participate.

### CASE STUDY – VOLUNTEERING

## DOUBLE THE IMPACT

Helen

“I was absolutely appalled when I discovered that one in 10 Australian children live in disadvantage. I love The Smith Family’s belief that every child deserves a chance and I wanted to be a part of that,” says Helen, a Smith Family volunteer.

Helen has been involved in children’s education for 24 years. When she learnt about the effects of disadvantage on so many children in Australia, she decided to help make a difference.

“I love volunteering with The Smith Family. It has given purpose to my week and it’s lovely to feel part of a team helping young people to achieve their goals,” says Helen, who provides administrative support in her local Smith Family office.

In a delightful turn of events, the weekly activity has also reunited the former teacher’s aide with Bridget, a student who used to attend the school where she worked, and who is now a fellow volunteer at The Smith Family. The pair have reconnected through their passion for giving back to the community.

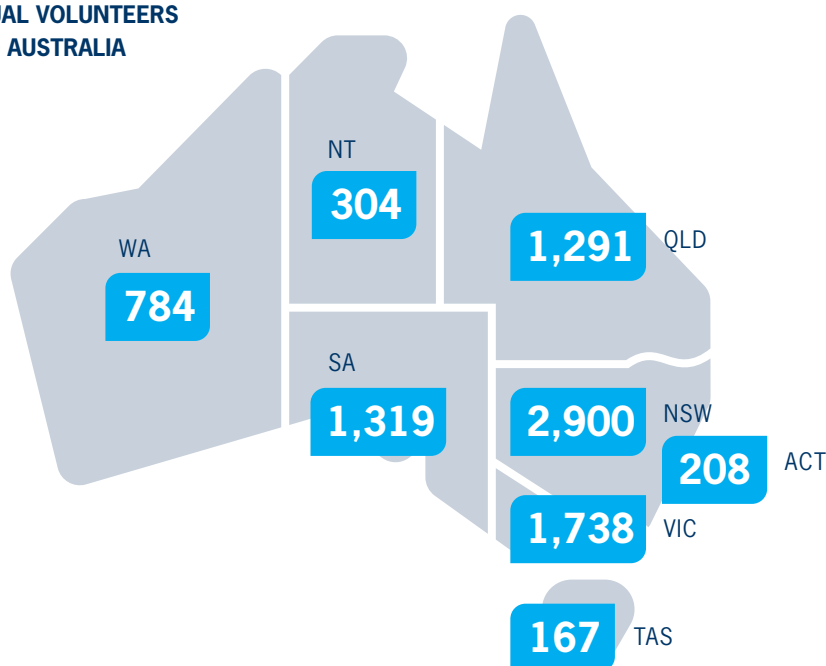
In the few months that Bridget has been volunteering, she’s really proud of the contribution she’s been able to make. Like Helen, Bridget provides vital support for Smith Family reading and mentoring programs and *Learning for Life* sponsorship recipients.

“I have really enjoyed learning more about the programs The Smith Family runs and seeing firsthand the difference it makes to young people and their families,” Bridget says.



Smith Family volunteers, Helen (L) and Bridget.

## INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS AROUND AUSTRALIA



**THE NUMBER  
OF VOLUNTEERS  
GREW BY  
MORE THAN 10%  
IN 2014-15**

### RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION

Mandatory screening of volunteers who are involved in child-related activities is critical. Our Volunteer Coordination Unit, itself staffed primarily by a team of dedicated volunteers, ensured incoming volunteers were registered and underwent police/working with children and reference checks prior to being matched to suitable roles. Our Volunteer Relationships team, which supports staff working with volunteers, created new resources to assist team members in their role as volunteer managers.

As advocates of our work, volunteers often communicate to the wider community about what we do to support disadvantaged students. This year, we introduced a new online induction program, helping volunteers to learn how their donation of time benefits our work. High-quality role-specific training, also delivered online, ensured volunteers were well prepared, and, importantly, understood key policies such as child protection and privacy.

Recruitment channels were diversified to attract more volunteers to support the growing number of participants in our *Learning for Life* programs. Media coverage highlighted the benefits that volunteering with The Smith Family provides and the satisfaction that volunteers gain from their involvement. We also profiled volunteering opportunities to our financial supporters as another way for them to engage with us.

### SECTOR CONSULTATION AND MAINTAINING GOOD PRACTICE

We supported the consultation phase of a project run by Volunteering Australia, to develop a new set of national standards for volunteer involvement. We also completed an audit of our volunteer management practice to ensure we continued to achieve high standards as a sector leader.

### VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Volunteering Australia's 2015 theme for National Volunteer Week 'Give Happy, Be Happy' provided the opportunity to thank our volunteers and to communicate the impact volunteerism can have on individual and community wellbeing.

Thank you to every volunteer who contributed in some way. Your support, time and skills helped us to make a lasting difference to the lives of disadvantaged Australian students.

For more information or to apply for current volunteer opportunities, go to [thesmithfamily.com.au](http://thesmithfamily.com.au)

# 16,672

members in 2014–15

## 1,143

Learning for Life students  
sponsored by VIEW Club members

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

## VIEW CLUBS OF AUSTRALIA

For more than 55 years, VIEW Clubs of Australia (Voice, Interests and Education of Women) has shared our vision of a better future for young Australians in need.

It is the only national women's volunteer organisation focused on advocating for and supporting disadvantaged young Australians. As a valued part of The Smith Family, VIEW Club members fundraise, volunteer, conduct advocacy, and provide sponsorship for disadvantaged students in our *Learning for Life* program. We are truly grateful for their support.

Through their networks in 340 clubs across Australia, VIEW members raise awareness about the importance of investing in a child's education to break the cycle of disadvantage. Their collective voice extends The Smith Family's reach far beyond where we directly work.

Throughout 2014–15, the organisation's theme was 'Connecting Women, Inspiring Futures'. As VIEW National President Robin Perros says, "Through its substantial ongoing support, VIEW Clubs are inspiring the futures of the next generation."

### CASE STUDY – VIEW CLUBS

## THE IMPACT OF VIEW

Barb



"After more than a decade I'm still passionate about what The Smith Family does. It's a fabulous organisation and I really feel a part of the 'family'."

In 2001, having recently retired, Barb Colson heard about VIEW Clubs of Australia while travelling interstate and decided it was an idea worth bringing back to her hometown of Perth.

"I really liked the fun and friendship aspect of it, and then when I got to know about VIEW's association with The Smith Family I was really sold on the idea. I established the First WAVE Club (Western Australia VIEW Evening) with 25 members and was its inaugural president.

"Our members immediately loved the idea of the *Learning for Life* program, and within the first year we were already sponsoring a student."

Barb (R) and fellow VIEW Club member Monica have provided volunteer administration support to The Smith Family's Perth office.

Barb has taken on a number of different leadership roles within VIEW to further its reach in Western Australia. In addition, every Wednesday for the past 13 years, Barb and fellow VIEW Club member Monica O'Donoghue have provided volunteer administrative support to the team at The Smith Family's Perth office.

"Through my volunteering I'm fortunate to see firsthand what The Smith Family does and how it relates back to VIEW. I strongly value education and can see that in working together, VIEW and The Smith Family are making a huge difference to the lives of many young Australians.

"I've worked hard to help form more clubs in Western Australia so their members might have as much fun and make as big a difference as we do. VIEW has given me a whole new lease on life, new friends, and the opportunity to give back to the community."

There are now six VIEW Clubs in Western Australia, sponsoring 50 *Learning for Life* students.

## SPONSORSHIPS

As of June 2015, VIEW Clubs sponsored 1,143 disadvantaged students nationally, enabling each to make the most of their education through the assistance and support of our *Learning for Life* program. This makes VIEW Clubs The Smith Family's single largest community sponsor of *Learning for Life* students. The highly engaged support of VIEW members for their students is one of the most distinctive features of the club's membership.

## ADVOCACY

Every two years, VIEW members select one from among their national resolutions to be the focus of their advocacy work. This year, during Anti-Poverty Week, the resolution to "recognise the role of community organisations in supporting an equitable education for all Australian children" provided the opportunity to raise awareness and public understanding about the link between financial disadvantage and educational performance.

As part of VIEW's advocacy role, local media are encouraged to build awareness of key issues in the community. In 2014–15, clubs secured more regional media coverage than ever before. This helped to attract new members and promote the work of VIEW and The Smith Family. The organisation's participation in International Women's Day also grew this year. A record 27 events were held in regions nationwide to celebrate the day.

VIEW national councillors continued to connect with their federal, state and local government representatives and other prominent figures in their communities to raise awareness of the work their members do.



VIEW National Executive (standing) National Vice Presidents Sue Field, June Greentree and Lyn Gerstenberg with National President Robin Perros

## COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

In March 2015, Jane Prentice MP, Federal Member for Ryan in Queensland, addressed the Australian Parliament, highlighting the work of VIEW Clubs:

*"Groups like VIEW often go unnoticed in our community, and this is why it is so important to highlight the work that they do. Their volunteers work tirelessly to promote and support the work of The Smith Family and give children from disadvantaged backgrounds a chance to achieve their dreams. I want to thank the VIEW Clubs and acknowledge all the work they do in supporting these children to ensure they reach their full potential."*

## SUPPORTING OUR RECYCLING OPERATION

This year VIEW built closer connections with The Smith Family's Recycling Operation. Clubs in NSW partnered with Smith Family retail stores. Members actively supported

Recycling Operation initiatives, such as National Recycling Week, spoke to the media about donating clothes to The Smith Family, and gave up their time to volunteer in stores.

## OPERATIONS

Building membership levels and ensuring a sustainable future for VIEW remain important. The Future of VIEW Working Group conducted interviews with club secretaries to better understand the current state of clubs and membership. Regional development meetings in other states and territories provided further opportunities for feedback. A development conference was held in Western Australia to help broaden the profile of VIEW in Western Australian communities.

## NEW CLUBS

This year, three new clubs were formed: The Vines Evening and Prospect in South Australia, and Plenty Valley in Victoria.



Seynab

## LONG-TERM SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS

“The Smith Family has helped me immensely. I don’t think I would be where I am today or have gone to university,” says Seynab, a long-term *Learning for Life* student.

*Learning for Life* sponsorship support throughout primary school and secondary school was essential in helping Seynab to complete Year 12 and go on to further education.

She is now studying a double degree in nursing and paramedic science at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). QUT and The Smith Family have a long-standing partnership that supports *Learning for Life* in south-eastern Queensland and delivers programs to support school engagement and transition to tertiary education.

“Life was pretty hard. The financial aid really helped with uniforms and shoes and school camps and excursions. The Smith Family also supported me by providing me with a mentor, and even Christmas cards and gifts.”

Currently on the *Tertiary Mentoring* program, Seynab still receives financial assistance from her sponsor to help cover the cost of her tertiary studies. She has also been matched with a mentor who has firsthand experience of her chosen industry and knowledge of how to navigate career pathways.

“I like the *Tertiary Mentoring* program because it provides networking with somebody in the same field as you, somebody to aspire to. My mentor provides me with all the resources that can assist me in becoming a great nurse or paramedic,” says Seynab.



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4**  
TO BUILD A HIGH-PERFORMING  
AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

**A MEASURED, TESTED  
AND STRATEGIC  
APPROACH TO  
MANAGING OUR  
RESOURCES**

# OUR PEOPLE

We value greatly the input and talents of our people. The work they do at The Smith Family is making a lasting difference to disadvantaged students and their families; their efforts are hugely appreciated.

'Implementing' was a key theme across the organisation in 2014–15. We focused on developing our change management processes and resources, people capability, and our culture and values.

The positive feedback we receive formally and informally from team members confirms that we are taking the right approach. The continued reduction in staff turnover from 14.9% in 2013–14 to 11.6% in 2014–15 is a positive indication of our effective engagement with our team. This rate is well below the current not-for-profit sector average of 16.5%.<sup>1</sup> The Aon Hewitt Engagement Survey that collects team member feedback is conducted biennially, with our next survey to be completed in October 2015.

## OUR CULTURE AND VALUES

This year we completed a two-year process of consultation with team members and leaders to identify our desired culture, refresh our values and develop a culture change vision. A Culture Forum of 20 team members was formed, drawn from different geographic regions and teams within the organisation. The focus of this group over the last 12 months has been to identify the behaviours that will take our culture from one that is considered good to one that our people say is great. A set of team member behaviours was identified and The Smith Family Leadership Promise was developed; the latter comprises eight leadership capabilities and the behaviours that underpin them.

Using the Leadership Promise, a custom-designed 360-degree feedback survey was developed for all managers to participate in during 2015.

## OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

After receiving feedback from team members that change was managed inconsistently across the organisation, we conducted an assessment and identified gaps in our change management processes and capabilities. Assessment findings informed the development of new frameworks and resources for change management. In addition, we invested in developing change leader capabilities by delivering Mastering Change workshops.

During the year, the Executive Team delivered roadshow-style presentations in each state and territory. The aim was to communicate the organisation's progress against the five-year strategy and the priorities for the coming year. Also launched at the roadshows, was a set of refreshed values that had been developed after comprehensive internal consultation.

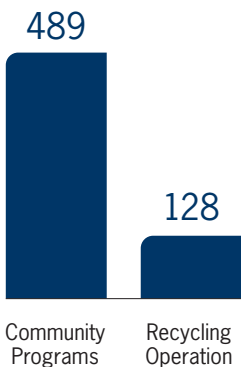
In 2015, we began developing a new intranet. Our vision for this resource is that it will enable all team members to have a better and more effective day at work. The new intranet will facilitate increased

<sup>1</sup> Aon Hewitt Australian Non-Government Organisations Remuneration Report May 2015.

### TEAM MEMBERS

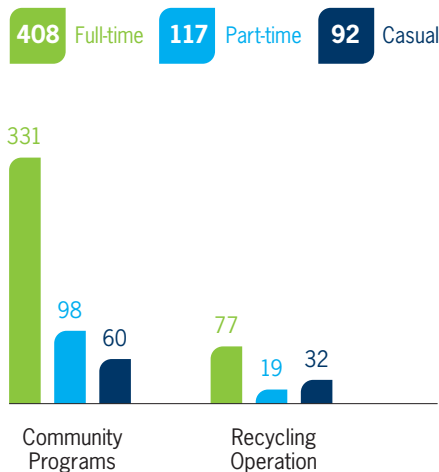
as at 30 June 2015

617



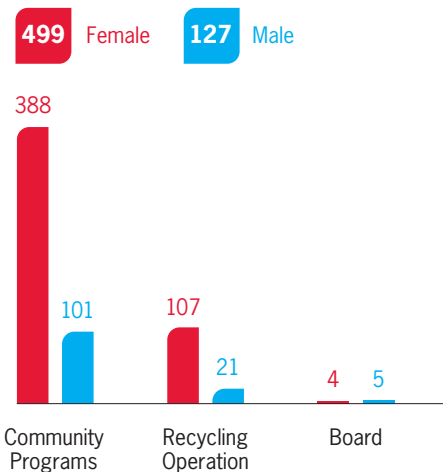
### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

as at 30 June 2015



### GENDER COMPOSITION (including Board of Directors) as at 30 June 2015

as at 30 June 2015



collaboration and communication among team members. Success requires the high involvement of team members across the organisation and is being supported by the improved change management processes we introduced this year. The first stage of the new intranet is due for delivery at the end of 2015.

Increased investment in technical training in our IT systems, helped to ensure team members were equipped with the necessary skills to do their jobs effectively.

### OUR RECOGNITION SCHEME

Our formal team member recognition scheme, comprising the Reach Awards (peer recognition) and Forbes Award (CEO and Executive Team recognition), acknowledged 10 team members during the year. Each had made an outstanding contribution to the organisation's vision and mission while demonstrating our values. Selected from among the shortlisted winners of the Reach Award, the prestigious Forbes Award was awarded three times to recognise exceptional performance.

### NEW POLICIES

This year we undertook a review of our existing Smith Family policies, and developed and rolled out some new policies, including the Complaints Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy. The latter further demonstrates our commitment to ethical behaviour. Released in October 2014, the policy provides guidelines for any person or organisation associated with The Smith Family who may wish to discuss or report an actual or suspected wrongdoing.

The Smith Family's Privacy Policy and supporting documentation were updated to ensure compliance with current law and organisational practices, and to implement recommendations from a privacy audit undertaken by our partner PwC Australia.

Key policies including Privacy and Child Protection are available at [thesmithfamily.com.au](http://thesmithfamily.com.au).

### MELBOURNE CBD OFFICE MOVE

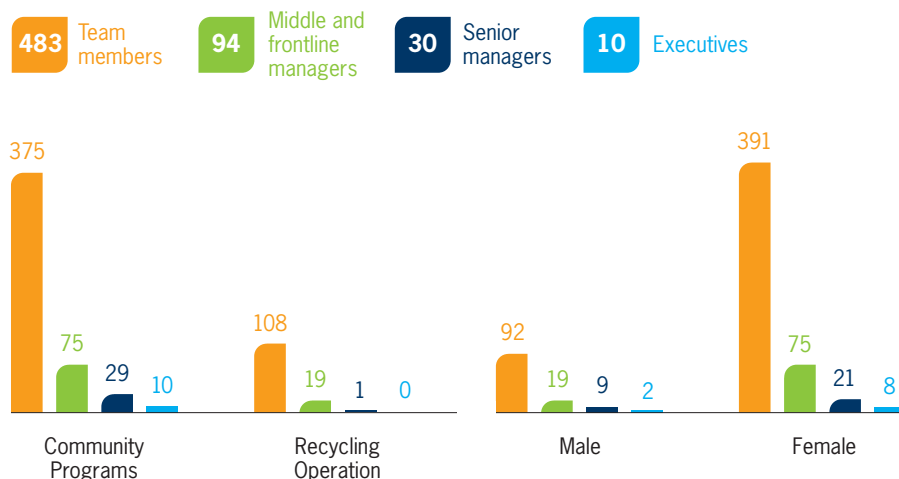
More than 50 of our team members moved from our former Collingwood office into a new Melbourne CBD office space. We thank our partner Officeworks and also Goodwin Property Advisory for their pro-bono support, which contributed significantly to our successful relocation.

### WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

To improve the management of hazards, risk assessments, and incident and injury reporting we have identified a new electronic work health and safety system. This will be implemented in 2015–16 and will strengthen our ongoing commitment to providing safe and healthy workplaces for all who work with us.

### BREAKDOWN OF ROLES AND GENDER COMPOSITION

as at 30 June 2015



# 617

team members, with 489 working in Community Programs and 128 working in the Recycling Operation

# 2.5%

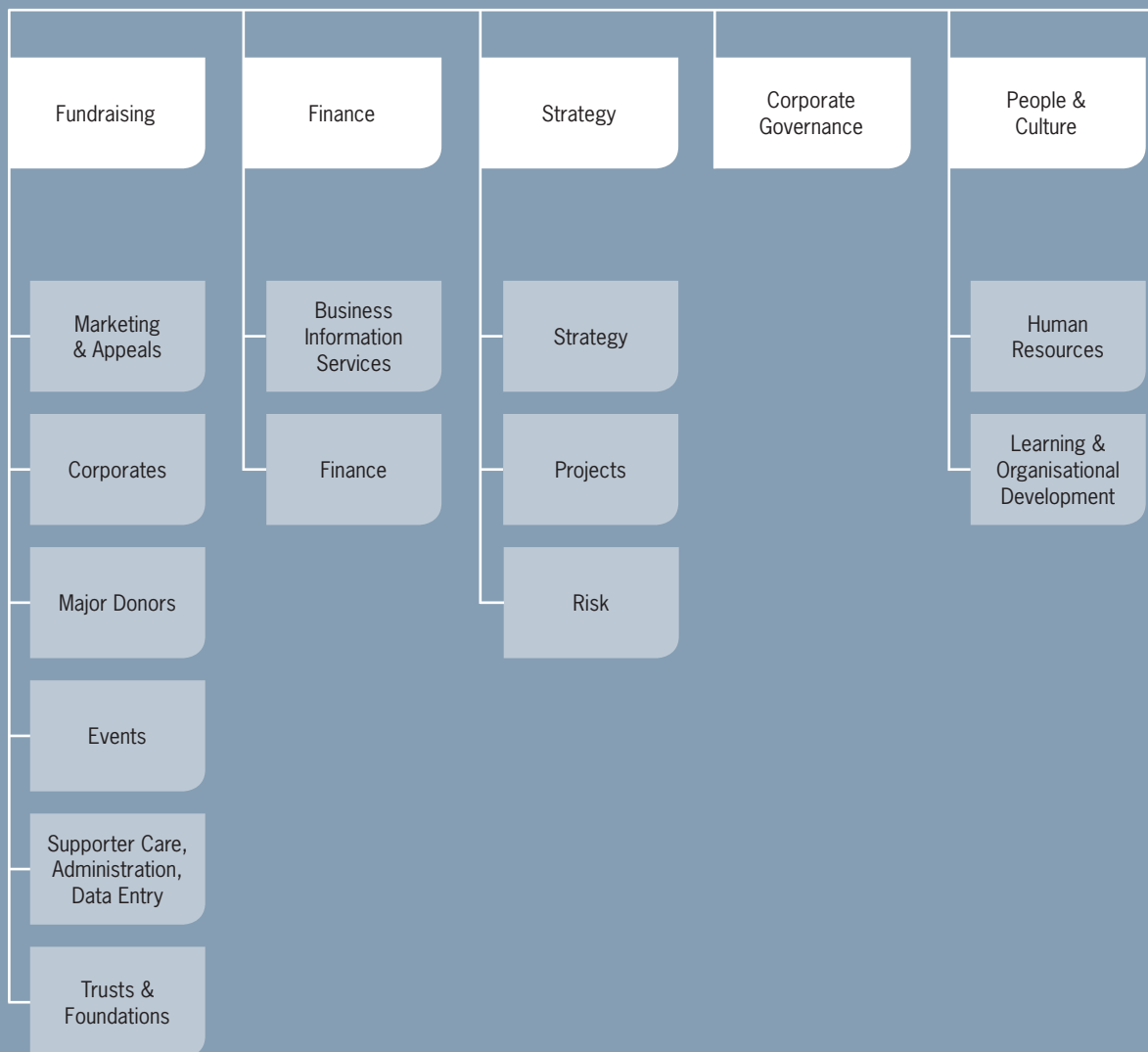
of Smith Family team members identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people

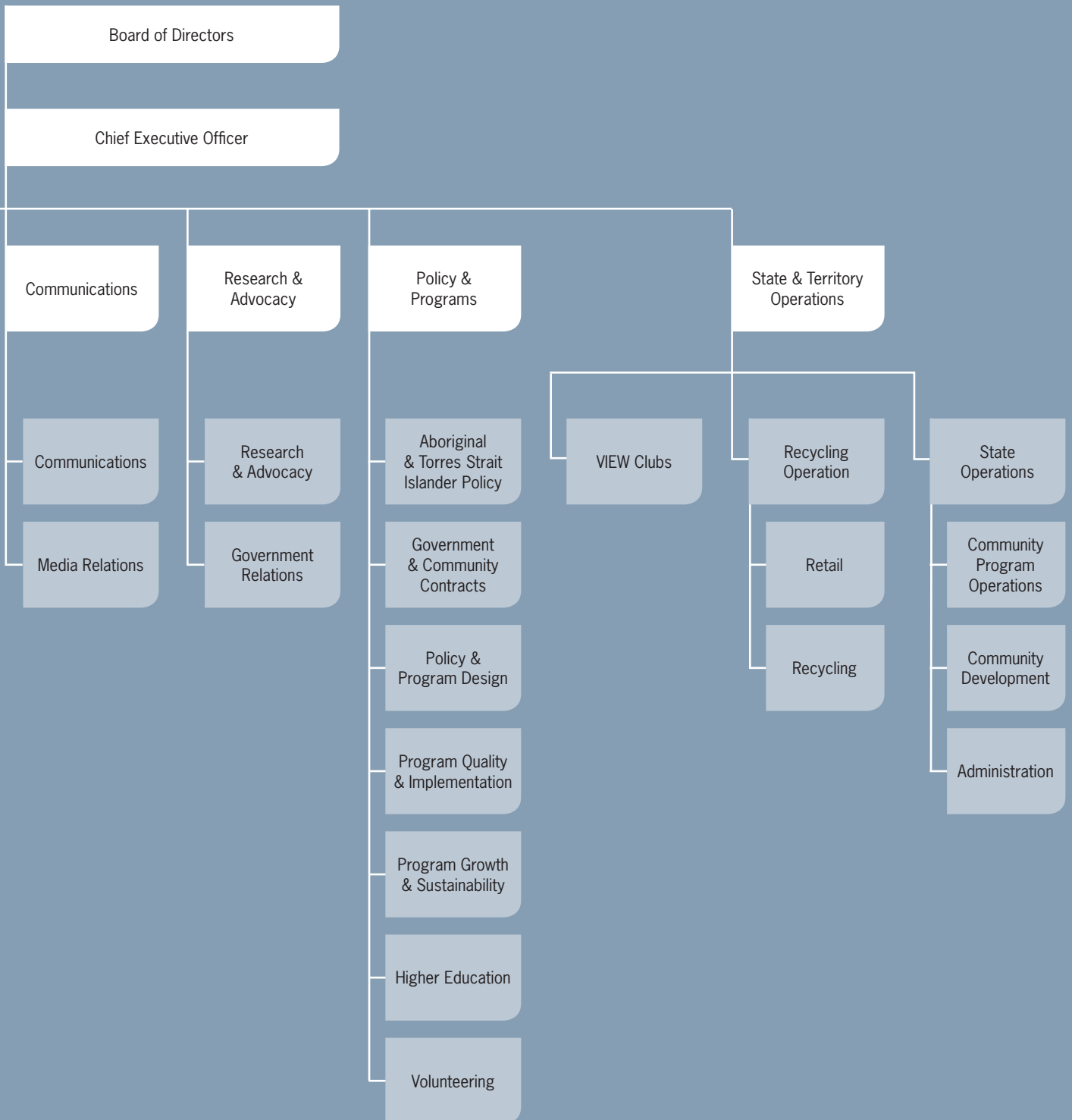
# ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The Smith Family comprises 489 team members employed in Community Programs and 128 team members employed in our Recycling Operation, a total of 617 team members.

Team members in Community Programs work in the community to deliver programs; in events, fundraising, marketing and supporter care; and in support teams – including business information services, communications, finance, people & culture, policy & programs, research, strategy and volunteering.

The Recycling Operation has team members in 19 retail stores in NSW and the ACT, a recycled clothing export operation, and the recycled clothing facility at Villawood, NSW.





## OUR SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Our supporters expect us to spend their funds wisely. Therefore, just as evaluation underpins our program work, we regularly assess and update our internal systems and processes.

We aim to provide the most cost-effective and efficient ways to deliver our support to disadvantaged students and families.

In accordance with our five-year strategy, the theme for the 2014–15 year was *implementing* (see page 11). Here are some of the highlights:

- During the first two years of our five-year strategy, we piloted a range of delivery models for our work in the community. The pilot models helped us explore how best to strengthen the support we provide while optimising the use of our team resources. In 2014–15 we implemented recommendations from the pilot evaluations. These were introduced to our *Learning for Life* teams in a phased approach, the key change being the introduction of role specialisation.
- By mid-2015, 64% of *Learning for Life* team members had transitioned to one of two roles: family partnership coordinator or programs coordinator. To support the change, new *Learning for Life* policy and practice guidelines were approved and implemented, and family partnerships training was provided to relevant team members. Remaining *Learning for Life* team members will transition as funds become available.
- A new financial reporting and budgeting tool was launched to improve the effectiveness of our budget management and reporting processes.
- We introduced a major project management framework and some associated resources for team members. These significantly improved our major project governance, management and reporting.
- A further stage of our Disaster Recovery Plan led to us implementing Office 365, email in the cloud. This secured access to essential data services for network users in the event of unforeseen outages, serious communications failure or a significant evacuation event from our major site. In the event of any of these occurring, this plan will ensure continuous access for all users to email.

## OUR RECYCLING OPERATION

The Smith Family has long been known for our recycled clothing business, with hundreds of clothing collection bins and 19 retail stores in NSW and ACT selling new and recycled donated clothing and accessories.

The surplus revenue generated from these sales locally and from overseas markets helps to offset our organisational costs, ensuring that more of the funds received from fundraising activities can be spent on programs benefitting our students.

In 2014–15, the surplus was down compared with previous years, due in part to changing buying patterns, devaluation of currencies in our export markets and changes to government regulations that have caused trading difficulties with our export partners. To mitigate these circumstances, we implemented a range of strategies including exploring new overseas markets, diversifying and expanding our product offerings both locally and offshore, and implementing operational improvements.

With proven logistics and processes in place to handle the efficient collection and sorting of donations, this year we turned our focus to the retail arm of the business. A much-valued partnership with The GPT Group (GPT) enabled a skilled volunteering project to benefit our stores. Outcomes included the production of new contemporary marketing collateral and the development of a flagship store design to help bring more customers in. We launched the “Buying is Giving” campaign across all stores, and planning is underway to implement an upgrade that is consistent with this design. With support from GPT, a range of technology improvements were also made to improve retail processes and ensure better tracking of stock, sales and returning customers.

This year our Recycling Operation team members focused on building stronger connections with our *Learning for Life* program coordinators and also with VIEW Club members in the communities where our stores are located. Greater integration between the Recycling Operation and the broader operations of The Smith Family and VIEW Club helps to increase awareness in local communities about our recycled clothing business. Many VIEW Club members volunteered in our retail stores and promotional material about VIEW Club membership was made available in-store. *Learning for Life* team members helped promote retail campaigns to our network of families to encourage new customers for our range of affordable clothing and accessories.

We continued to support a range of environmental and social initiatives. This year, 74% of all material collected was reused in some way. This equates to over seven million kilograms of textiles diverted from landfill. Through a growing partnership with our waste supplier, we continued the up-cycling of metal, cardboard and other materials to further reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. New work with them has seen over 70% of the material we divert from landfill being recycled in some way.

The surplus revenue from sales generated through our Recycling Operation offset our infrastructure costs.



# \$2.1m

Recycling Operation surplus returned to The Smith Family in 2014–15 offsetting The Smith Family's infrastructure costs

## 700

clothing collection bins

## 100

business partners donating good-quality, clean wearable clothing

## 19

retail stores in NSW and the ACT selling new and recycled clothing and accessories

## 7.4m kg

of material diverted from landfill in 2014–15 and reused or on-sold through our retail, wholesale and export channels



Our network of retail stores in NSW and ACT sells new and recycled donated clothing and accessories.

Following an initiative of Better Business Partnership, we piloted a program with Sydney's Kirribilli Markets to place bins in which market vendors could donate quality material not sold on market day. The market pilot delivered unwanted, good-quality clothing and an opportunity to broaden this new source of supply.

We continued to run our social inclusion employment programs, including *Work for the Dole*, as well as community service and

corrective service opportunities. During the year the Recycling Operation provided more than 300 volunteering opportunities.

We are grateful for our long-standing partnership (of more than 50 years) with Stewart House. This sees the collection of over 145,000 kilograms of clothing donations from over 600 schools each year.

### AWARDS



Excellence in Business, State Winner, NSW Business Chamber



Excellence in Business, South-Western Sydney Region Business Awards, NSW Business Chamber

Excellence in Export, South-Western Sydney Region Business Awards, NSW Business Chamber



Highly Commended Environmental Solutions, Premier's NSW Export Awards

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**JAMES M. MILLAR AM** BComm FCA  
FAICD

Chairman and Non-executive Director since 2011. Non-executive Director, Mirvac Limited, Fairfax Media Limited, Helloworld Limited and Macquarie Radio Network Limited; Chairman, Export Finance and Insurance Corporation and Forestry Corporation of NSW; Trustee, Australian Cancer Research Foundation and Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation; Member, UNSW Australia Business School Advisory Council and Grant Samuel Advisory board; Former CEO of Ernst & Young Oceania Region.



**ARUN K. ABEY** BEd BA (Hons) FFSIA

Non-executive Director since 2007. Co-founder and Chairman of ipac securities limited and Walsh Bay Partners Pty Ltd; Strategy Consultant; former General Manager of Strategy and Corporate Social Responsibility for the AXA Asia Pacific Group; extensive experience in investment and economic market research; has written extensively on investment matters in both the press and academic journals and is the co-author of a number of books relating to money and well-being.



**CHRISTINE N. BARTLETT** BSc MAICD

Non-executive Director since 2007. Non-executive Director, Mirvac Limited and GBST Limited; Member, Minter Ellison Advisory Council and UNSW Australia Business School Advisory Council; former Director, PropertyLook and National Nominees Limited and former Deputy Chairman of the Australian Custodial Services Association; extensive management experience with IBM, Jones Lang LaSalle and NAB.



**CHRISTINE CAWSEY AM** BA DipEd  
MEd Admin

Non-executive Director since January 2013. Principal of Rooty Hill High School and Immediate Past President of the NSW Secondary Principals' Council; former member, Premier's Council for Women; Member, GWS Giants AFL team board and ACEL board; co-author of *Learning for Leadership – Building a School of Professional Practice*.



**DR JEFFREY A. HARMER AO** BA (Hons)  
DipEd PhD FAIM FIPAA FANZSOG

Non-executive Director since January 2013. Co-Chair, Ministerial Council on Child Care and Early Learning; Director of Capital Health Network in the ACT; Director of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute; former Secretary of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2004–2011) and of the Department of Education, Science and Training (2003–2004); former Managing Director of the Health Insurance Commission (1998–2003).



**MARK G. JOHNSON** BComm FCA CPA FAICD

Non-executive Director since 2012. Non-executive Director, Westfield Corporation, The Hospital Contribution Fund of Australia Ltd and HSBC Bank Australia Ltd; Chairman, MH Premium Farm Holdings Limited; former Chief Executive Officer of PwC in Australia (2008–2012) and Chairman of PwC Foundation, as well as senior roles over 15 years managing PwC's Assurance and Business Advisory Services line of services, and its Consumer and Industrial Products team and Audit, Technical, Risk and Quality groups; Member, UNSW Australia Business School Advisory Council.





**CHRISTINE F. MCLOUGHLIN** BA LLB (Hons)

Non-executive Director since 2009, Deputy Chairman since 2011; Non-executive Director, Suncorp Group, Whitehaven Coal Ltd, NIB Holdings Limited and Spark Infrastructure Group; Member, Minter Ellison Advisory Council; Inaugural Chairman, Australian Payments Council; former member, Aon Advisory Board; former Director, AMP Foundation, Australian Nuclear Science & Technology Organisation, St James Ethics Centre, Victorian Transport Accident Commission and Westpac's Life & General Insurance entities; background in law, financial services, insurance and telecommunications.



**JEREMY C. R. MAYCOCK** BEng (Hons)  
FAICD FIPENZ

Non-executive Director since January 2013. Chairman, AGL Energy Ltd (Director since 2006), Arrium Ltd and Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd; former Non-executive Director, Nuplex Ltd; former Managing Director and CEO, CSR Ltd (2007–2010); inaugural Chairman, Cement Australia Pty Ltd; former Member, UNSW Australia Business School Advisory Council.



**DR LISA J. O'BRIEN** MBBS (Hons) MBA  
MHRM&C FRACMA

Executive Director since 2011. Non-executive Director, Australian Schools Plus Limited, Community Council for Australia Limited and BUPA ANZ; a medical practitioner registered in New South Wales; Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators; former CEO, Skin and Cancer Foundation of Australia; Founding member, Lou's Place, a drop-in centre providing respite and support for women in need; over 25 years' experience in health care, community services, bio-medical and information technology sectors.



**PAUL X. TOBIN** BA LLB

Non-executive Director 2009–2015. Founder and Director, Foundry Group Pty Ltd (a digital commerce company); Principal at Bay Street Capital Pty Ltd (an independent corporate advisory firm); former Chief Legal Officer and Company Secretary, ComputerShare; former Executive Chairman, Aussie Farmers Direct.



**EMERITUS PROFESSOR KENNETH W. WILTSHIRE AO**  
BEcon (Hons) MSc (Lon.) PhD, FIPAA MAICD

Non-executive Director 2010–2014. JD Story Professor of Public Administration and Leader of Not for Profit Unit, University of Queensland Business School; Co-Chair, Review of the Australian School Curriculum; Non-Executive Director, Institute for Urban Indigenous Health; Member, Advisory Committee of the Asia-Pacific Centre for International Understanding; former Special Adviser to the Australian National Training Authority; Inaugural Chair, Tertiary Entrance Procedures Authority Queensland; Chair, Review of the Queensland School Curriculum.

# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

## COUNCIL OF GOVERNING MEMBERS

The Council of Governing Members advises and consults with the Board of Directors on the operations of The Smith Family, ensuring that they are in line with the Objects stated in our constitution. Governing Members are also ambassadors for our work, helping to promote our activities to broader audiences.

The Council forms the voting membership of the organisation and is responsible for the election of directors and for approving the annual accounts. In addition to the Directors of the Company, the members of the Council are:

The Hon. Bruce Baird AM; Barbara Cail AM; Cindy Carpenter; Brian France AM; Professor Ross Griffith; Jane Hemstrich; Tim Holden; John Kelly AM; Chris Leptos AM; Robin Perros; Greg Ruddock; Richard Turner AM; Terry Walsh; Richard Warburton AO; Emeritus Professor Ken Wiltshire AO; and Geoff Willmott.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is the decision-making body of The Smith Family, responsible for governance and management. The Board assumes the company's fiduciary and legal obligations. Its roles and responsibilities are governed by the constitution and a comprehensive Board charter. Both the constitution and the Board charter were reviewed in 2012.

The Board comprises up to 10 honorary non-executive directors and the Chief Executive Officer, each offering a range of skills in addition to their Board-level experience in various sectors.

Emeritus Professor Ken Wiltshire AO retired from the Board at the end of his term of office in December 2014, and Paul Tobin retired as a director in June 2015 when he moved overseas.

Management conducts a detailed induction process with new directors to ensure that they have a comprehensive understanding of the organisation, our strategy and programs. This ensures each director is able to contribute constructively from the outset.

Regular Board evaluations are a means of ensuring that the Board continues to deliver effectively on its responsibilities. The evaluation in 2014 revealed positive results against a range of criteria. It acknowledged the improved quality of information being provided and the broader engagement being achieved with management, these being the two key matters raised in the 2012 survey. The survey highlighted a need for the Board to show greater diversity in terms of both skills and geographic spread, matters which are addressed on an ongoing basis as new Board appointments are considered.

## MEETINGS HELD AND MEETINGS ATTENDED

Director	Board of Directors		Corporate Governance		Finance and Audit		People and Culture	
	Number held	Number attended	Number held	Number attended	Number held	Number attended	Number held	Number attended
A. K. Abey	8	6			3	3		
C. N. Bartlett	8	5					2	2
C. Cawsey	8	7						
J. A. Harmer	8	5						
M. G. Johnson	8	5			3	2		
C. F. McLoughlin	8	7					2	2
J. C. R. Maycock	8	6	1	1				
J. M. Millar	8	8	1	1	3	2	2	2
L. J. O'Brien	8	8	1	1				
P. X. Tobin	8	7	1	1				
K. W. Wiltshire	4	3						

## BOARD COMMITTEES

The Board has three sub-committees:

**The Corporate Governance Committee** continued its focus this year on securing the ongoing involvement of governing members, and initiated a recruitment process to replace outgoing directors with candidates that reflected the Board's concern to achieve a broader skills base and geographic spread.

**The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee** has continued to focus on enhancing the investment policy and mandate to ensure that financial resources are safeguarded while earning acceptable returns, and that sufficient funds are available to meet requirements.

The detailed strategic and operational risk review undertaken in 2012 to quantify the risks to the achievement of the organisation's five-year strategy is reviewed periodically, as are the mitigation strategies implemented to address the identified risks. Following an extensive review of data security, PCI compliance and disaster recovery plans in 2014, related activity was undertaken in 2015 to address key concerns.

**The People and Culture Committee** provided advice on remuneration policies and practices, and ensured compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements with particular emphasis on work health and safety requirements. It also reviewed progress on strategies to ensure a high performing organisation.

## OTHER GROUPS

In addition to the formal committees of the Board, several other groups operate within the organisation.

The National Council of VIEW leads the overall development of VIEW and administers policy development. The National President is Robin Perros, whose two-year term commenced in January 2014, and she is supported in her role by three national vice presidents: Sue Field, Lyn Gerstenberg and June Greentree.

Other members of the National Council are Lyndsay Basford (acting councillor), Robyn Bursill, Jean Clarke (acting councillor), Mary Daly, Kathie Diskin, Elizabeth Doorey, Madge Doust (acting councillor), Beverley Giglio, Cynthia Guyenette (acting councillor), Barbara Hyslop, Marian Kingham, Laura O'Brien, Jan Roberts, Marjorie Schultz, Lola Shaw, Toni Thomas, Gloria Walter, Gwen Wilton, Jennie Wynd and Sunnie Watts.

## Advisory Groups

A number of advisory groups provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer and senior management on particular issues and projects. These are:

The Recycling Operation Advisory Group, chaired by Greg Ruddock, with Bill Brown, Dennis Price and Mark Ward.

The Advisory Group on Issues Concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, chaired by Leah Armstrong, with Dr Jeff Harmer, Emily Knight, April Long, John Rawnsley, Leanne Smith and Lidia Thorpe. Peter Dawson left during the year.

The Strategic Development Advisory Group, with Arun Abey, Warwick Bray, Tony Davis, Adam Lewis, Peter Stumbles and Paul Tobin.

The Information Systems Advisory Group, chaired by Doug Snedden, with David Boyle and Julian Wee.

During the year a new advisory group was established, the Principals Advisory Group. The group is made up of primary and secondary principals, and includes presidents of both the Australian Primary Principals and Australian Secondary Principals Associations. Each state and territory is represented. The purpose of this group is to inform The Smith Family's longer-term strategy on and approach to working in partnership with schools. The Principals Advisory Group is chaired by board director, Christine Cawsey, with members Tammy Anderson, Sue Beynon, Stan Hagias, Norm Hart, Rob Nairn, Anthony Rodaughan, Shireen Thomas, Lorna Woodley and Dennis Yarrington.

The Smith Family is a company limited by guarantee. Its ABN is 28 000 030 179.

Its status as a Public Benevolent Institution (PBI) was confirmed in July 2005 by the Australian Taxation Office as part of its registration requirements for all non-profit entities, as was the organisation's status as an Income Tax Exempt Charity and a Deductible Gift Recipient. The organisation enjoys certain other tax concessions and exemptions consistent with its status as a PBI which relate to Goods & Services and Fringe Benefits Taxes.

The Smith Family is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and as required by law in each state and territory where it raises funds as follows:

### New South Wales

Registration number CFN 11049 – renewable in 2019

### Queensland

Registration number CP 4163 – registration is ongoing subject to meeting certain annual financial reporting requirements

### South Australia

Registration number 778 – renewable annually in January

### Tasmania

Registration number 170 – registration is ongoing

### Victoria

Registration number 10290 – renewable in 2018

### Western Australia

Registration number 20352 – renewable annually

### Australian Capital Territory

Registration number L19000133 – renewable in 2020

## FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

(Figures in \$'000s)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Gross income including Recycling Operation and VIEW revenue</b>	<b>81,558</b>	<b>84,208</b>	<b>94,670</b>	<b>100,847</b>	<b>106,274</b>
<b>INCOME</b>					
Fundraising					
Donations and corporate support	38,574	39,975	41,510	43,618	46,692
Bequests	4,201	3,983	3,741	3,366	4,813
VIEW Clubs net contribution	560	843	783	1,099	1,028
Government funding	16,525	17,434	24,376	26,138	22,589
Commercial operations net contribution	2,149	2,396	2,886	3,295	2,425
Investment and other income	1,783	1,285	2,504	3,386	9,239
<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>63,792</b>	<b>65,916</b>	<b>75,800</b>	<b>80,902</b>	<b>86,786</b>

### EXPENDITURE

Policy and programs	(51,384)	(53,770)	(60,655)	(61,896)	(61,760)
Fundraising	(8,640)	(10,178)	(10,499)	(13,032)	(16,585)
Promotion and profiling	(2,157)	(2,625)	(2,460)	(2,131)	(1,806)
Administration	(1,882)	(1,866)	(1,887)	(1,681)	(1,725)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(64,063)</b>	<b>(68,439)</b>	<b>(75,501)</b>	<b>(78,740)</b>	<b>(81,876)</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(271)</b>	<b>(2,523)</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>2,162</b>	<b>4,910</b>

### OTHER RESULTS AND INDICES

Recycling Operation and other commercial activities					
Sales and other revenue	15,162	16,453	17,210	19,091	17,357
Expenditure	(13,013)	(14,057)	(14,324)	(15,796)	(14,932)
<b>Commercial activities net contribution</b>	<b>2,149</b>	<b>2,396</b>	<b>2,886</b>	<b>3,295</b>	<b>2,425</b>

### VIEW Clubs of Australia

Revenue	5,313	5,078	5,329	5,248	5,583
Expenditure	(4,753)	(4,235)	(4,546)	(4,149)	(4,555)
<b>VIEW Clubs net contribution</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>1,099</b>	<b>1,028</b>

The net contribution from The Smith Family's Recycling Operation offsets administration costs and contributes to the costs of promotion and profiling.

### VOLUNTEERING

The Smith Family receives substantial contributions by way of pro bono support from corporate partners and volunteers, the value of which is not reflected in the financial statements. Volunteering contributions are valued based on the level of skill required by various volunteering positions.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Volunteer hours	304,958	343,908	417,603	463,853	516,750
Estimated value of volunteering contribution	\$8.5m	\$10.5m	\$12.2m	\$13.4m	\$14.8m

Fundraising costs as a percentage of fundraising income	14.6%	16.6%	15.1%	17.8%	22.4%
Fundraising, promotion and profiling costs as a percentage of fundraising income	18.2%	20.9%	18.6%	20.7%	24.8%

## FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

### INCOME

Since 2010–11, net operating income has grown by an average of 8% each year, from \$63.8 million to \$86.8 million in 2014–15. For commentary on our overall financial performance for the 2014–15 year, see page 5.

Donations and corporate support	Income in 2010–11 from individual donations and corporate support was \$38.6 million. By 2014–15 that had risen to \$46.7 million, representing average annual growth of 5%.
Government funding	The Smith Family received \$16.5 million in government funding in 2010–11. In 2014–15 that figure was \$22.6 million, an average annual growth of 8%. See page 17 for 2014–15 commentary.

### EXPENDITURE

Overall expenditure has increased from \$64 million in 2010–11 to \$81.9 million in 2014–15.

Policy and programs	Over the years as our revenue has grown, we have been able to extend the reach of our work. Expenditure on community programs has increased on average by 5% per year, from \$51.4 million in 2010–11 to \$61.8 million in 2014–15.
Fundraising	Fundraising expenditure increased from \$8.6 million in 2010–11 to \$16.6 million in 2014–15, on average by 18% per year. The significant lift in the past two years reflects our investment in regular giving initiatives, including the new face-to-face channel.
Administration	Expenditure on administration support in 2014–15 of \$1.7 million remained in line with 2013–14 as a percentage of funds raised at 2%, down from 3% in 2010–11.

### OTHER RESULTS AND INDICES

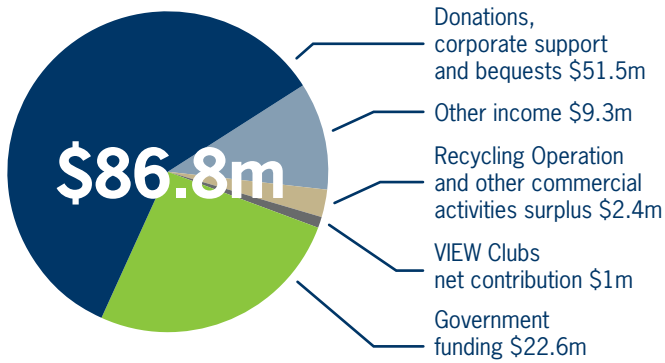
Recycling Operation and other commercial activities	Revenue from our recycling and other commercial activities has grown by 5% per year from \$15.2 million in 2010–11 to \$17.4 million in 2014–15. Revenue in 2014–15 was, however, down on the previous year due to a short-term drop in export sales.
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### VOLUNTEERING

Estimated value of volunteering contribution	With the increase in numbers of volunteers, the estimated value of the contribution of volunteers for 2014–15 is \$14.8 million compared to \$8.5 million in 2010–11.
Fundraising costs as a percentage of fundraising income	Fundraising costs as a percentage of income increased from 14.6% in 2010–11 to 22.4% in 2014–15 with the significant increase in the past two years resulting from our investment in new, long-term regular giving initiatives. For further fundraising commentary, see page 17.

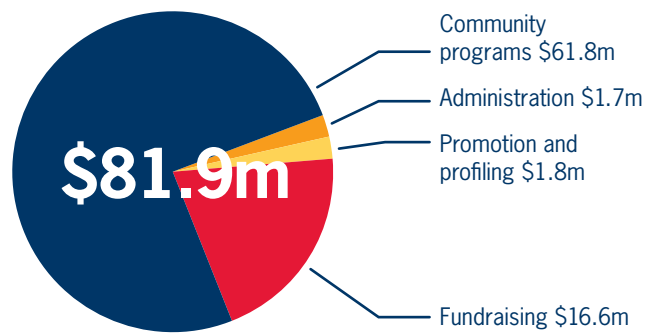
## WHERE WE OBTAINED OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

2014–15

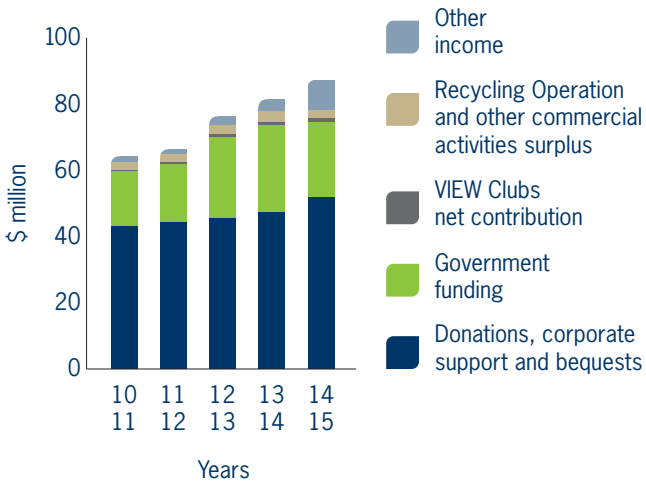


## HOW WE APPLIED OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

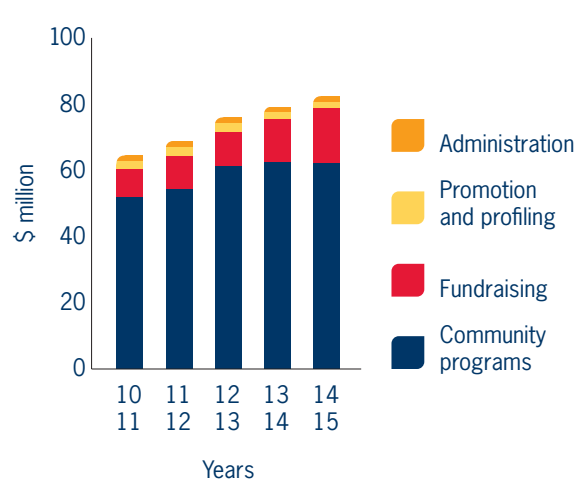
2014–15



### Five-year comparison



### Five-year comparison



## KEY INCOME STREAMS

### Fundraising

**\$36.7m**

from individuals through public contributions

**\$4.8m**

from bequests

**\$10m**

from corporate partners, universities, and trusts and foundations

**\$1m**

net contribution from VIEW Clubs of Australia

### Government funding

**\$22.6m**

from government

### Other

**\$9.3m**

from investments, sale of property and other income

**\$2.4m**

from our Recycling Operation and from other commercial activities

# CONTACT DETAILS

## GENERAL ENQUIRIES

GPO Box 10500  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Website [thesmithfamily.com.au](http://thesmithfamily.com.au)  
**T** Freecall 1800 024 069  
**E** [tsfmktg@thesmithfamily.com.au](mailto:tsfmktg@thesmithfamily.com.au)

Volunteer Co-ordination Unit  
**T** 1300 397 730

## NATIONAL OFFICE

Level 9, 117 Clarence Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
**T** 02 9085 7222 **F** 02 9085 7299  
**E** [tsfmktg@thesmithfamily.com.au](mailto:tsfmktg@thesmithfamily.com.au)

## Recycling Operation

2 Birmingham Avenue  
Villawood NSW 2163  
**T** 02 9754 6300 **F** 02 9728 3381  
**E** [customerservice@thesmithfamily.com.au](mailto:customerservice@thesmithfamily.com.au)

## VIEW Clubs of Australia

Level 9, 117 Clarence Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
**T** 02 9085 7178  
1800 805 366  
**F** 02 9085 7294  
**E** [view@thesmithfamily.com.au](mailto:view@thesmithfamily.com.au)

## THE SMITH FAMILY LOCATIONS

### Australian Capital Territory

Canberra  
Corner Launceston and Easty Streets  
Woden ACT 2606  
**T** 02 6283 7600 **F** 02 6282 1725  
Belconnen | Gungahlin | Tuggeranong

### New South Wales

Sydney  
Level 3, 17–21 Hunter Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150  
**T** 02 9895 1233 **F** 02 9689 3965  
Alexandria | Ashmont | Auburn | Blue Haven  
Buninyong | Chester Hill | Claymore  
Coffs Harbour | Cranebrook | Dapto | Dubbo  
Fairfield | Goulburn | Jesmond | Lithgow  
Macquarie Fields | Miller | Mount Druitt  
Nowra | Orange | Raymond Terrace & Karuah  
Seven Hills | Shellharbour  
Southern Wollongong | Springfield  
Tamworth | Taree | Tarrawanna | Tolland  
Tuggerah Lakes | Wiley Park | Windale  
Wyang

### Northern Territory

Darwin  
Level 1, 6 Pavonia Place  
Nightcliff NT 0810  
**T** 08 8985 6841 **F** 08 8985 5361  
Alice Springs | Borroloola | Darwin | Katherine  
Palmerston | Ramingining | Tiwi Islands

### Queensland

Brisbane  
Level 13, 340 Adelaide St,  
Brisbane, QLD 4000  
**T** 07 3115 6200 **F** 07 3337 6424  
Brighton | Brisbane | Caboolture | Cairns  
Cape York | Coolangatta | Coomera | Inala  
Ipswich | Logan | Mackay & Sarina  
Maroochydore | Redlands | Rockhampton  
Southport | Toowoomba | Torres Strait  
Townsville

### South Australia

Adelaide  
Ground Floor, 97 Pirie Street  
Adelaide SA 5000  
**T** 08 8224 1400 **F** 08 8223 4421  
Christie Downs | Elizabeth Downs  
Elizabeth Vale | Hackham | Morphett Vale  
Port Adelaide Enfield | Port Augusta  
Salisbury North | Smithfield Plains | Whyalla

### Tasmania

Hobart  
Level 2, 47 Salamanca Place  
Hobart TAS 7000  
**T** 03 6223 2627 **F** 03 6223 8912  
Bridgewater/Gagebrook | Burnie/Wynyard  
Chigwell/Claremont | North-East Launceston

### Victoria

Melbourne  
Level 7, 50 Queen Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
**T** 03 9473 4300  
Bairnsdale | Ballarat | Bendigo | Brimbank  
Broadmeadows | Collingwood | Dandenong  
Epping | Geelong | Lakes Entrance | Morwell  
Shepparton | Werribee

### Western Australia

Perth  
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Collie | Gosnells | Kwinana | Midland  
Mirrabooka | Pilbara

## RETAIL STORES NEW SOUTH WALES

Bankstown.....	02 9796 3412	Dubbo .....	02 6884 2311	Port Macquarie .....	02 6583 4230
Bateau Bay .....	02 4334 7844	Fairfield .....	02 9727 7251	Rockdale .....	02 9567 5615
Blacktown.....	02 9671 6899	Goulburn.....	02 4822 2450	Toronto.....	02 4950 5099
Bowral.....	02 4861 1383	Hurstville .....	02 9586 4996	Wollongong.....	02 4227 6936
Burwood.....	02 9715 7406	Liverpool .....	02 9600 6853	Woden (ACT).....	02 6232 5374
Campsie .....	02 9787 3954	Marrickville .....	02 9572 6065		
Coffs Harbour .....	02 6652 9460	Penrith .....	02 4731 3011		

# A lifelong impact

“There are so many choices that I’ve made as a result of being on *Learning for Life*, it just gave me the confidence to be able to pursue a tertiary education, to pursue more of what I was interested in, and it’s given me a vision for the future. [Sponsorship] is really one of the key ways to help people get out of poverty, to pursue their dreams, to pursue skills, and ... to change lives. I’m a living example of that.”

Rebecca



University graduate and sponsored student

“I would like to extend my everlasting gratitude to you because if it wasn’t for your generosity, I may not have been able to put my granddaughter through her last years of school. I am pleased and very proud to let you know that she has passed her VCE and has turned into a very lovely young lady.”

Janice

Grandmother of a *Learning for Life* student

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*everyone's family*